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Labour is ready to ditch Unionists

Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

Tony Blair has decided to get tough with the Ulster Unionists by offering no concessions to them on Labour's Northern Ireland policy before tonight's crucial vote of censure.

The Labour leadership has written off the hope of David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, delivering his nine MPs in a vote of no-confidence to bring down the Government before 1 May. The Labour leader is therefore prepared to call the Unionists' bluff over

Mo Mowlam interview, page 2

tonight's vote on the motion attacking Minister of Agriculture, Douglas Hogg.

Mo Mowlam, the opposition spokesman on Northern Ireland, signalled Labour's readiness to alienate the UIster Unionists, if necessary, in an interview for The Independent in which she predicted that the Unionists would revive their historic formal links with the Tories after the general election. Last night, in a BBC television in-

terview, the Ulster Unionist MP Ken Maginnis said Labour had made a number of mistakes on tonight's censure its timing wrong, it's got its objectives wrong, and it has got its relationship with other parties wrong, and that is not a good sign for the future," he said.

The Labour leadership is ready to call Mr Trimble's bluff over his threats to vote against the Government in the belief that although they may join Labour tonight at the last minute, they would not do so in any subsequent confidence vote, which could force an early general election.

The Government has offered a series of concessions to secure the vital votes of the Ulster Unionists and hold on to power, including a U-turn to lift the export ban on Ulster herds; delaying the implementation of the North report with legislation to curb the Loydist marching season; and the expected rejection of demands for a fresh inquiry

into the Bloody Sunday massacres. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, is holding in reserve a further concession, to give powers to an Ulster grand committee to vet legislation through the Commons which could be offered, if the government whips fear a defeat.

Mr Blair said at the weekend he did not believe Labour would win tonight's vote, following signs by some Ulster Unionists they would abstain. Labour prepared to test the Unionist's backbone on the beef issue, which is of crucial importance to Ulster farmers, many of whom are Loyalists, because the Labour leadership has now calculated that Mr Trimble will not seek to bring down the Government.

The Unionists may also have calculated that their best chance lies in propping up the Government until May to limit the chances of an overall Labour majority, in order to give the Unionists more leverage in a hung Parliament. Ms Mowlam is holding to the Government's line on the peace process, but she believes that a rightwing Tory Party, with Unionist support, will withdraw support for the bipartisan approach to Ulster pursued by John Major. "I am not convinced that bi-partisanship will hold because I think we will see a very different Tory Party after the election," she said.

with Mr Trimble last week, said she lowing Sinn Fein into the peace talks, but she is sticking by her support for the North report, and she said she was prepared to "look again" at the Bloody Sunday killings.

In spite of weekend reports that two left-wing MPs had been demoted from Labour's backbench committee on Northern Ireland, the Labour leadership believes that the Unionists are at a crossroads and will turn back to the Tories in the next Parliament.

The rival Democratic Unionist Party, led by The Rev Ian Paisley, is contemptuous of Mr Trimble's position. "Trimble is a leader without a party. There are at least three of his MPs who won't vote against the Government and others who are waiting for him to trip up so they can take over as leader," said one DUP source.



Kew shows off its orchids

The Miltonia hybrid (above) is just one of the blooms on show at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in south-west London where the 1997 Orchid Festival, which ends on 31 March, displays a selection from the world's 20,000 orchid species, 5,000 of which are grown at Kew for research and conservation, as well as for their beauty Photograph: Jason Bye

Looted gifts are tip of iceberg

The precious gifts of uncertain Prime Minister and other ministers received from the President of Albania are potent and destruction of Albania's national heritage that has gone on unchecked ever since the country's emergence from communist dictatorship six years ago.

Under pressure from the Labour MP Denis MacShane, Buckingham Palace and the Foreign Office have been looking back over their records of President Sali Berisha's visit to Britain in 1994 when relies from the Ottoman empire - believed to have been lifted illegally from xt S national museums in Albania -

far from the only ones. Hundreds of precious items, particularly icons, national costumes tures, have vanished from Albania's national and local museums and are believed to have sunk into a giant black mar-ket that is still thriving today.

Museums in Apolonia and Butrint in the south of the country, once considered among the most prestigious in the country, are now virtually empty. A famous weapons mu-

every last weapon it ever had. A history museum in Berat, site of the first provisional government set up by the Communists in 1944, has been converted into a private video bingo parlour. The whereabouts of its former contents are unknown.

Much of the looting took place in the wild, uncontrolled spasm of violence and political turmoil that shook the country in 1990-91 as the Communist system collapsed and the coun-

town of Gjirokaster has lost democratic elections. But according to Neritan Ceka, former director of the National Archeological Museum and a leader of one of Albania's opposition parties, the government must shoulder blame for failing to take any action to protect the

national heritage. "They have spent millions on the police but nothing on a special force to look after museum and artworks," Mr Ceka said.
"They have set aside no funds to recover objects stolen in the

Tirana attacks Independent journalist

The Albanian government has responded to The independent's reports that it is in fact a gangster regime involved in drug-smuggling, gun running, sanctions busting and money laundering. The Abanian news agency ATA put out a government statement on Saturday saying that reports by the *Independent* writer Aridrew Gumbel were close to what Albania's tabloid press has been saying in recent years. "The article alleges that civil liberties, independent media and democracy in general has suffered

have taken part in the traffic, large numbers of artworks passed illegally into the hands of diplomats from one country in particular who were posted to the country in 1991-92 when everyone was anxious to have foreign aid and private invest-

According to Albanians who

ment pushed in their direction. Still more was taken out of the country and sold. Police in Greece have recently recovered four Roman-era marble heads from the archaeological museum in Butrint, which is just a couple of miles from the Greek border in southern Albania. Other works have been

recovered in Munich. The traffic has been so intense, according to Mr Ceka and other sources, that the market has been contaminated with fakes from Italy and Greece, According to one report a gang importing fake icons was forced to give up their enterprise because the black market was already flooded with genuine articles.

Investors' protests, page 8

Emu on a tightrope . The success or failure of a single currency will depend on de-cisions made during the next

£30 - is thisenough to make you vote Tory?

Diane Coyle Economics Editor

The boost to pay packets from this year's income tax cuts will be felt from the end of April: just in time, the Government hopes. to help sway voting intentions for May Day election.

The increase in after-tax pay for the majority of people will be in the range of £15 to £30 the latter sum enough to pay for three bottles of Tesco Champagne: a meal for four at Pizzaand Manchester; a Superapex rail return from London to Edinburgh; a 22-minute mid-day call to Malagasay; or 12 one-

hour swims at a local pool.

The reduction in the basic rate of income tax by 1p to 23p and increase in tax allowances announced in November's Budget take effect from 1 April and will increase most taxpayers' take-home pay by the end of the month. Somebody earning £20,000 a year will gain an ex-tra £17 a month, and a £30,000 salary will generate an extra £31 a month after tax.

This year's tax boost is simiar in size to last year's, which delivered the biggest one-off inrease in spending power since 1986. This resulted in a huge improvement in consumer confidence last spring.

Surveys show that confidence as since recovered to levels last seen in the late 1980s, when the economy boomed following Nigel Lawson's 1p reduction in the basic rate of income tax. Government strategists are hop-ing that a similar boost this year will pay an electoral dividend.

People who will gain when the Alliance and Leicester and how many free shares they will

up to £6bn in June, to be fol-lowed by the Halifax stockmarket flotation £10.4-12bn in July.

The Conservatives' electoral ropes are resting on the economic upturn, and the tax cuts provide one of their strongest cards. Although mortgage costs are near to 30-year lows, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Kenneth Clarke, has become embroiled in an embarrassing public row with Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, over whether



or not interest rates should rise

heat up with an interview published in a German magazine today. Asked about whether interest rates should go up, Mr George downplayed the Chancellor's excuse - the strong pound - for not increasing the cost of borrowing.

Mr George said: "Past expe-

rience has shown that the danger is in not being able to Woolwich building societies recognise when to restrain do join the stock market, could also mestic demand. Then interest receive the letters telling them - rates have to be increased more strongly later, producing the get in the fortnight before 1 type of 'boom and bust' we are May. These two societies will all seeking to avoid."

Andrew Gumbel

origin which the Queen, the and priceless Roman-era sculpsymbols of the wanton looting

were showered upon his hosts. The Queen's inlaid silver box. arde John Major's flintlock pistol

and Douglas Hogg's jewelled dagger may be the most striking items to have found their way out of Albania under suspicious circumstances, but they are seum in the beautiful southern try struggled to prepare its first initial frenzy."

under this government. The Democratic Party government, which was elected in March 1992, has done its utmost to build the democracy and the rule of law, despite the difficulties presented by the horrible communist government," the statement said. "This political bias in articles on Albania is nothing new for Andrew Gumbel," the statement continued. "I regret very much that

a prestigious paper like The independent comes to publish articles of that low quality written by an unreliable journalist."

BP accused

Bodyguards of a senior BP executive in Colombia threatened to "skin alive" a protester campaigning against the oil gi-

ant, alleges a Euro MP. Richard Howitt, Labour MEP for Essex South, says that the Colombian army and some right-wing paramilitary groups have oppressed people who have protested about BP's operations in Colombia. There have been death threats and

assassinations. Daily Mail' censured

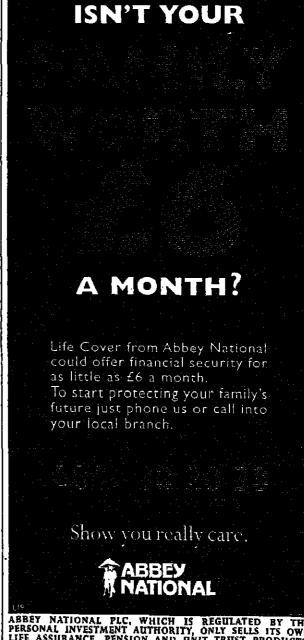
The Attorney General is to consider whether the Daily Mail has committed contempt of court by accusing five white men of murdering black teenager Stephen Lawrence. The announcement came af-

ter the former Master of the Rolls, Lord Donaldson, yesterday accused the newspaper of interfering with the course of iustice.

Musical discord Two musicals which graphically illustrate the often huge di-

vide between critical acclaim and public taste received major recognition last night at the Olivier awards. Page 5

year, according to an authori-tative new report. Page 18



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Business & City 17-19 Foreign News 8-11 Leading Articles 14

Inquiry to be held into

An official inquiry is to be launched next month into the jailing of hundreds of 15- and 16-year-olds alongside.

Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of Prisons, is

to set up the investigation following growing concern that

jailing of teenagers

hardened criminals.

Contempt threat to Daily Mail

Ulster spokeswoman makes clear commitment to peace process under a Blair government

The Attorney General is to consider whether the Daily Mail has committed contempt of court by accusing five named men of murdering the black teenager Stephen Lawrence.

The announcement came after the former Master of the BBC Radio 4's Mediumwave Rolls, Lord Donaldson, accused the newspaper of interfering with the course of justice. The Daily Mail printed pictures of five men under the banner headline "Murderers", and issued the challenge: "If we are

wrong, let them sue us". The Mail took the unusual

Colin Brown Chief Political Correspondent

Sinn Fein and the IRA have been urged by Mo Mowlam, the Labour Party's spokeswoman

on Northern Ireland, not to wait

for a change of government before declaring a new ceasefire.

"They might as well do it now, and not wait for a Labour

government," Ms Mowlam said

in an interview for The Inde-

pendent about Labour's plans for the Northern Irish peace There is a fear that there would be new conditions if the Tories regained power, and a more right-wing Tory Party

faced heightened violence from the IRA. Mr Major has said he would want to push the peace

process forward after the election, without divulging details.

well briefed on the detail of

include the incorporation of the

European Convention on Hu-

man Rights, discussions on a Bill

of Rights, and early talks with

the police following the Smith

review of the RUC with the set-

ting of targets and objectives.

Ms Mowlam rejects an internal

Ulster settlement on Unionist

lations with Dublin. She would

look again at the evidence for

a fresh inquiry into the killings

of Bloody Sunday, which is

high on the Irish government's

lines, and would seek better re-

the Unionists.

Don't

step after a jury at Southwark Coroner's Court ruled last week that Stephen was unlawfully killed in a "completely unpro-voked racist attack by five white

programme yesterday: "The action of the Daily Mail has, without doubt, interfered with the course of justice. That is regarded very seriously by the courts, and it is known as contempt of court ... It is interfer-

ing with the system of justice." He added: "I would hope that the Attorney General would refer the matter to the courts at the earliest possible opportunity in order that the courts may consider whether this is a gross contempt of court."

The Attorney General's office said later that there could be no question of a statutory contempt of court, which may prejudice a specific court case, because there were no criminal or civil proceedings in being. But a statement said: "Lord

Donaldson's suggestion that there might be a contempt of common law will be carefully for the Daily Mail said: "We are entirely satisfied that we have not committed any contempt. whether statutory or common

Contempt of common law requires proof to the criminal standard - beyond reasonable doubt - of an intent to interfere with the administration of

cessful prosecution had failed. According to the coroner, Sir lence and fear" preventing witnesses coming forward, hampered a prosecution.

A case against two of the accused was abandoned when the Crown Prosecution Service ruled in July 1993 that there was insufficient evidence to secure

The CPS decision prompted the Lawrence family to launch. The inquest jury's verdict of "unlawful killing" came after several attempts to bring a sucformally acquitted at the Old

Brooks, a friend of Stephen who witnessed the attack, was unsafe.

Meanwhile, Frances Lawrence, widow of murdered headmaster Philip Lawrence, yesterday called for an inquiry into the Stephen's murder. Speaking on BBC1's Breakfast With Frost, she said: "The murder of Stephen Lawrence was the most terrible death which reached and shattered the very core of society and humanity itself. I think there should be a

full-scale public inquiry."

Media+, The Tabloid

iarge numbers of juveniles are continuing to be locked up with adults and older youths despite government pledges to end the practice. He is known to be concerned about the risk of suicide, learning criminal and drug habits, and bullying from older inmates. There is also evidence that some prisons are failing to provide the legal minimum education for the 15- and 16-year-olds in their care.

Juveniles are now one of the fastest growing groups in the country's jails. In 1992, a total of 1,098 young people aged 15 and 16 were being held in penal establishments a figure which rose to 1,889 in 1995 – a 72 per cent increase. Paul Cavadino, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, said: "An inquiry is urgently needed, the

number of juveniles wrongly held in prisons is rocketing.
Regimes have been deteriorating and the risk of young people being contaminated by experienced criminals has intensified, along with the prospect of bullying and

GPs give Dorrell ultimatum

Family doctors' leaders have given Stephen Dorrell an ultimatum to back down over "supermarket surgeries" or face a renewed threat of GPs joining the general election campaign against the Government.

The leader of the BMA provides a supermarket surgeries and the BMA provides a supermarket surgeries.

The leader of the BMA negotiating committee, Dr Ian Bogle, warned the Health Secretary in a telephone call at the weekend that he was not satisfied with the amendment promised by the Government to the Primary Care Bill to answer GPs' demands. "It doesn't protect against the commercialisation of general practice, and it doesn't match up with the promises given by Mr Dorrell," said a senior

Judges to rule on pain case

The right of consenting adults to inflict pain for sexual, pleasure will be decided by human rights judges in

Strasbourg on Wednesday.

The case has been brought by three British men who were jailed after the notorious "Operation Spanner" use in a group of consenting sado-masochists inflicted sexual torture on each other.

The campaigning group Liberty has backed their case, arguing that their convictions are contrary to the Human Rights Convention which safeguards against interference in the right to private life.

Polar women in final warm-up

Members of the first all-women expedition to the North Members of the first all-women expedition to the North Pole donned Arctic kit yesterday for their final training session on gale-swept Dartmoor. A hike across the high moor from Princetown was followed by an exhausting session of pulling tyres attached to waist harnesses – preparation for hauling 120lb sledges for hours a day in temperatures as low as 45C.

The women are members of the 20-strong McVities
Penguin Polar Relay, chosen from 60 hopefuls after a series
of tough SAS-style tests on the moor last autumn. The
expedition starts on 13 March.

Rocket man set for lift-off

A British rocket enthusiast is aiming to become the first amateur in Europe to break the sound barrier when his home-made rocket is test launched today from an Army range at Otterburn, Northumberland. The rocket - built by Steve Bennett, 32, of Dukinfield, Greater Manchester - is being put through its paces to test its engine power, computer configuration and parachute mechanism, before a full-scale flight in April, when Mr Bennett hopes to set a new world record for altitude reached by an amateur's rocket - 15 miles high.

Store in downsizing move

A range of mini-fruits and vegetables for children is being introduced at Safeway in an attempt to encourage youngsters to eat more healthily, and to address concerns expressed by parents and dieticians. A recent study for the Cancer Research Campaign found that in many homes Christmas dinner was the only time children received the recommended amount of vegetables.

Lottery jackpot spread widely

Nineteen winners shared the £8,115,736 jackpot in Saturday's National Lottery draw. They will each receive £427,144 after matching the six winning numbers - 14-21, 7, 38, 47 and 34. The bonus ball was 13. A further 41 ticketholders receive £60,906 for matching five numbers and the bonus ball, and 2,403 matched five balls to win £649. A total of 84,551 win £40 for matching four numbers, while 1,275,960 pick up £10 for matching three balls.

wait for Labour, Mowlam urges the IRA

No surrender: Mo Mowiam has infuriated Unionists by ruling out an internal Ulster settlement on their terms

agenda, "We want to make Ms Mowlam is equally reticent about what she has in sure the talks are inclusive which is why we want Sinn Fein mind, but she is clear in her deinto them. It is important it is termination that the peace process will be given a push by not just an devolved assembly a Blair government. The with proportionality built in Labour leader is said to be very and rights protected. It is important there is a dimension of Northern Ireland, with an incross-border cooperation and it tention of placing it high on his is equally important that the Westminster-Dublin strand agenda, in spite of scepticism by which often tends to be ignored - is part of that. We do Confidence-building meanot see the talks process as just Assembly-wide," she said. sures Labour would introduce

The first sign of Labour's willingness to upset the Unionists and step out of the Government's shadow on Ulster came with the North report, which ministers refused to implement before the election, to the anger

of Dublin. Labour would implement the North report, proposing a statutory body to adjudicate on routes for the marching season. Labour has engaged in talks with Orange Lodges in its at-

tempts to avert a repeat of the riots after the Drumcree march last summer, and it is seeking more community negotiators.

Ms Mowlam is keen to dispel the impression that Labour would be "soft" on the IRA but s warv of giving details of Labour's plans, to avoid fuelling false hopes by the nationalists for concessions. "It is very difficult in the position in which we are caught now, where if we outline a whole host of things which are different, there is a any push to get rid of the Govtendency for people to say we will hold on and wait'. That does give a chance for a spiral of vi-

"There is a chance of an unequivocal ceasefire by the IRA. There is a chance of Sinn Fein being brought into the talks process. My real central message is don't wait for a change of government because in relation to the kind of violence we have seen in the last 24 hours our position will not change." litical sense to throw away the considerable leverage which

Ulster Unionists see no gain in losing Major

David McKittrick

unlikely to lend their weight to ernment, seeing little or no political advantage in hastening the election of a Labour government

The feeling among the nine MPs is that the parliamentary arithmetic does not in any event give them a decisive say in whether or not the Major government should survive or fall. But underlying this is a strong sense that it would make no po-

they presently enjoy over a government which is clearly anxious to retain their goodwill. The decision on how the

MPs will play the Hogg vote of censure will, as is traditional, be taken only in the hours before the vote, but sources among them say it is most unlikely that they will vote against the Gov-ernment. Even if they do, they will not wish to repeat this in a subsequent confidence vote.

The party's leader, David Trimble, may have more radical instincts, but it is clear that a majority of the nine are reasonably content with John Major's present attitude towards them and see no reason for dis-

carding what they regard as an advantageous position. One MP said vesterday: "There is no wave of pressure saying throw them out, none at all."

In Belfast and Dublin yesterday it was suspected that the continued refusal of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, to offer an apology for the 13 deaths of Bloody Sunday 25 years ago, was at least partly due to a desire to keep the Unionists on board.

Sir Patrick said at the weekend that an apology was for criminal wrong-doing and there was nothing to indicate this had happened.



Billy-Jo Jenkins: 'Vicious and

Girl murdered with metal spike

A teenage girl murdered at her home was beaten around the head with a metal spike in what police have described as a "vicious and ferocious attack.

Thirteen-year-old Billie-Jo Jenkins was found dead by her foster father when he returned with two of his other daughters to the family home in Hastings. East Sussex, on Saturday Billie-Jo, described by neigh-bours as a "caring, loving girl", had been painting the patio doors when she was attacked.

Detective Superintendent, Jeremy Paine said: "The awful thing that confronted him and his daughters on their return is almost unimaginable.

attack on a young girl in her

A post-mortem examination carried out yesterday revealed that the teenager died from se-vere head injuries resulting

from several blows to the skull. The murder weapon is be-lieved to be an 18-inch metal spike found by the killer in a store room in the back garden. This was a vicious, ferocious ack on a young girl in her me."

It was discovered by police lying next to Billie-Jo's body.

There were no signs of any

sexual attack and the house had not been broken into.

Officers are conducting house-to-house inquiries in the area and will be speaking with Sion and Lois Jenkins, their four daughters, aged 12, 10, nine and seven, and Billie Jo's natural parents, who live in Barking. east London.

seen near the family's home on Saturday. Neighbours have told police he was acting strangely and asking around for accom-modation. Police say the attack will have left the killer's clothes blood-stained and covered in

white paint.
The Jenkins family have been Detectives are also trying to track down a man in his 40s with prowlers since Christmas.

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Never marry a Mitford or you'll get involved in family feuds which carry on for generations. The sagas of the literary sisters go beyond the grave - and, in this latest instance, concern precisely that: graves.

There was more than one notable absence at Jessica Mitford's memorial celebration at the Lyric Theatre in London last night. Nobody expected Diana, Lady Mosley, to turn up. The widow of Sir Os-wald Mosley had fallen out with her sister Jessica decades ago and they had not spoken since.

But everyone was hoping to hear the Hon Deborah Freeman-Mitford speak about her late sister, the most rebellious of the celebrated sisterhood, who died aged 78 last summer. Debo, as the Duchess of Devonshire is known, was even down on the memorial programme to speak.

Debo's decision followed reports last

week that the memorial gathering was to be a festival of all the bizarre rituals highlighted by Jessica in her best-selling expose of the American funeral industry, The American Way of Death, written in 1963.

Rumours that four undertakers would be parading their wares and a Cadillac-shaped coffin sitting on the stage summoned im-ages of an occasion with which Debo wanted nothing to do.

"Debo took offence," said one source. She thought: This isn't a memorial for my beloved sister, it's a circus in a theatre.' It's very sad. It's a total misunderstanding.

But organisers were doing their best to play down Debo's no-show last night. "She's the only one who is still fit enough to come, said Morag Pavich, one of the event's co-ordinators. "We put her as the member of the family that would most probably be there, but it will probably be Jessica's son. Benjy, who will do something small to introduce the evening."

No unity for the Mitfords – even beyond

the

grave

The official reason why Debo didn't come was that she was unwell. "She's not been in good health," explained Ms Pavich. She really wants to attend but said she wouldn't be able to say until the day. We're not sure she hasn't been ill. That's all we've

However, a spokeswoman at Debo's circumstances." Jessica was startled into saying that surely sisters were life's cruel heard the Duchess was ill. "Her grace is

Troubled history: Jessica and Unity (top) as children; Jessica in recent-years (left); Unity, Diana and Nancy in their heyday, and 'Debo' – the Duchess of Devonshire

away, I'm afraid," she said yesterday. "I'm As it turned out, the memorial was not the blindingly whacky event it was trumped up to be. The death displays were limited to books and films and a DIY coffin.

"There are no displays actually on the stage," insisted Ms Pavich. "There is a green coffin – a disposable coffin – and then just

books and paraphernalia and the person-alities of the day."

Some might say it would not have been a true Mitford send-off without a token squabble between the sisters. Since their

early twenties, Jessica and Diana only saw each other once, when they met for half an hour as their elder sister, Nancy, lay dying.
"I quite honestly don't mind what Decca [a family nickname for Jessica] says or thinks," Lady Mosley, 86, said recently. "She means absolutely nothing to me at all. Not because she's a Communist but simply be-

cause she's a rather boring person, really." Jessica's death from lung cancer last summer was not enough to reconcile Diana.

"I'm afraid 1 won't be going," Lady
Mosley said of her sister's memorial. Their falling-out dates back to the Second World War, when Jessica denounced Diana as dangerous because of her links with Fas-

cism, and she was kept in jail for three-anda-half years.
Six-hundred friends and family were invited to "Decca's" memorial. The speakers included Helena Kennedy QC, Maya Angelou, the American poet, and John

Mortimer, the novelist. Jessica was once telephoned in California, where she lived most of her life, by an English journalist who was writing an article about the Mitford sisters. She had already spoken to Nancy who had said: "Sisters stand between one and life's cruel

Moving mountain brings end of the world – sooner or later

Charles Arthur

Seattle

1800 cubic kilometres in size, which is creeping across the ocean floor from Hawaii, could cause a huge ocean isunami that would devastate Japan and wreck the world economy.

The wave would travel across the Pacific Ocean as fast as a passenger jet, yet would be barely noticeable until it approached the shoreline. Then it would devastate areas up to 300 metres above sea level, killing people and causing huge aroounts of damage to buildings. The question is, can we forecast when it will happen?

no, "said Dr Paul Segall, a geophysicist at Stanford University, California at the American As-An undersea mountain block sociation for the Advancement of Science conference here.

But measurements taken by radar on board orbiting satellites have shown that on the south flank of the undersea Kilauca volcano, off Hawaii, there is a huge block 20 kilometres long by 10km by 9km, which is moving at 7 centimetres per year, forced along by lava flowing from underneath it.

While that might not sound much, it creates the possibility of a "megaslump" - as the block crashes from one position to another, rather than sliding gently. That would cause an un-dersea earthquake cquivalent in And the answer is, at present,

magnitude to 7 or 8 on the Richter scale - which would prove devastating on land. Thousands of tonnes of water would be shocked into motion, and would head west across the Pacific. The tidal wave would take 15 hours to arrive in Japan, where the effects would be dramatic, and it could take years for the country to recover.

Fortunately, such events only seem to happen about once every 100,000 years, said Dr Segall. But they have clearly occurred before: coral remains have been found 300 metres up the side of a basalt mountain in Hawaii, a finding that cannot be explained by the rise of an undersea volcano, but instead by a huge wave subsuming the island. killed in the aftermath.

While the technology exists to monitor the movement of the underwater block, there is still no way to predict whether the move - if and when it comes will be sudden, prompting a "megashump", or slower, like an underwater landslide. The lat-

ter would cause little damage. "That scenario is more hopeful, but we haven't recorded any event like that happening. It's an open question.

One problem with a massive Isnnami might be the public's reaction to such a spectacular oneoff event. In 1960, a tsunami hit Hilo in Hawaii: when the public was warned about it, many headed down to the beach to see it come in. Sixty people were

BP accused on death threats

MP says bodyguard of company executive threatened to 'skin' Colombian protestor

صكدا من الاعل

Bodyguards of a senior BP executive in Colombia threatened to "skin alive" a protester campaigning against the com-pany, an MEP claims. Richard Howitt, Labour

MEP for Essex South, says the Colombian army and paramilitary groups have oppressed people who have protested about BP's operations. There have been death threats and assassinations. After interviewing and tane-recording community leaders and pressure-group repesentatives during a visit to the oilfield region of Casanare, he is demanding BP review its re-lationship with the Colombian army. "I believe BP managers must know or should know about human-rights violations carried out in the company's name, and with what appears to me to be the direct collusion of

some of their staff," he said. The company rejects this, and says if it found any evidence of staff or contractors involved in illegal acts it would dismiss them and pass the information to the Colombian prosecutor-general. What Mr Howitt and BP can agree on is that it is working in a dangerous and complex social and political environment in Casanare, in the foothills of the Andes north-east of Bogota.

The discovery of oil in the late 1980s attracted many poor peo-ple and two rival guerrilla groups who use kidnapping, extertion and drug dealing to finance their campaign against the government.

The army has come in to guard installations. Reports from rights organisations including Amnesty condemned the army for arbitrary arrests, beatings and killings of suspected guerrilla sympathisers. The army has also had links

with covert-right-wing paramilitary groups which use death

guerrillas. BP, which has invested £1.3bn exploiting Colombian oil, makes payments to the Colombian Ministry of Defence to provide boots, uniforms, food and shelter for the local soldiers. The company said 17 of its con-tractors had been killed by guerrillas. BP also hires a UK firm, Defence Systems Ltd, to

help with security in Colombia. BP and its local contractors have faced strikes, protests and

out illegal actions. Challenged by BP to visit the Casanare region, he did so this month, and returned with taped testimony which, he says, vindicates his claim. In one testimony a labourer with a BP contractor says three guards of Phil Mead, a BP associate vice-

president and its most senior manager in Casanare, threatened him outside a meeting called in protest at the lack of employment. There is no sug-



Risky business: The oil industry in Colombia has to nd with numerous problems Photograph: Rex Features

by security guards.

The main grievances have been that communities have not received enough of the new oil wealth, local people have not been given a fair share of the new jobs, contractors are paying unfairly low wages and the environment has been damaged. Some strikes have ended in violent clashes. The judicial authorities are investigating the killings of four agitators in a

town, El Morro, two years ago. Mr Howitt visited Colombia as part of a parliamentary delegation in autumn and alleged ty staff. In another testimony, BP had an improper relation- a former council worker said

recent years, including a strike ally knew of the incident. They started telling me bad words ... that I should stop fuck-

ing around, otherwise they

would skin me alive," reads the translation. Asked if the threats were made by Mr Mead's guards, the man said: "It is true that they were security guards of Phil Mead. He is a good person. I

have spoken to him. The bad thing is the Colombian people who surround these people." The threats, he said, were repeated by men in a car which he knew to be hired by BP securi-

that at an angry meeting at an oil well where local people were demanding work a BP community affairs officer telephoned the company's Central Production Pacility, "About an hour later the army came in. They had helicopters ... they saw about 50 people and re-alised we weren't armed. I am a witness where a BP person calls another BP person calling for the army to intervene. They said there were 50 guerrillas wanting to take over the well."

Mr Howitt said he would not

name his witnesses because it would endanger their lives.
"I've found there is a pattern. If you speak out against BP you can be roughed up, then be denonneed as a guerrilla. And once you're denounced then the paramilitaries can threaten you or even kill you. I listened to these people and I believe they are innocent of any link with the guerrillas. They don't want to be involved in violence and they live in fear." He said that on his visit "We were constantly watched by the army; stopped at several roadblocks. I was ordered out of a car and shoved up against it. I don't think BP should leave Colombia; it's not the company which has made it a violent society. But they have to achieve the same standards for human rights as they would

BP said its policy was to "op erate strictly within the law in Colombia, refusing to pay ex-tortion money to guerrillas and relying on the protection of the nolice and army.

The company had found evidence that two of its contractors had links with the guerrillas, and had stopped using them. "We have behaved in what we think is an exemplary fashion in difficult circumstances," said a spokesman. "If anyone has evidence to the contrary, bring it to us and we will take it to the prosecutorgeneral of Colombia."

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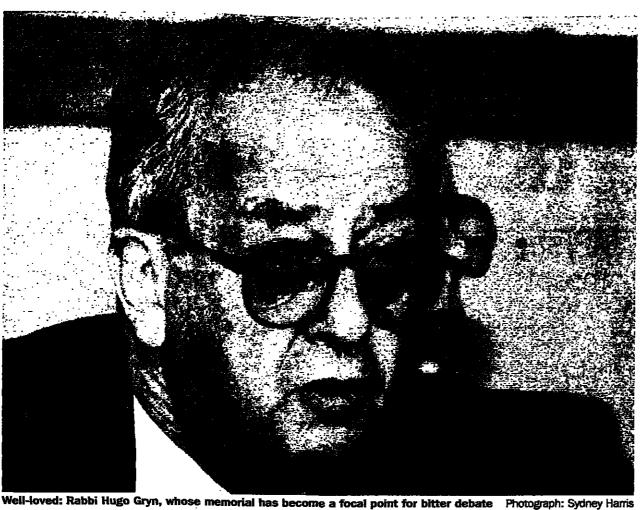


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In life he was the best-loved rabbi; his death is tearing the Jewish community apart

Louise Jury

Rabbi-Hugo Gryn was a sur-vivor of Auschwitz, a broadcaster renowned for his wry and compassionate contributions to Radio 4's The Moral Maze and arguably Britain's best-loved

Jewish leader. So when he died last year, many in the Jewish reform movement which he led were furious that Dr Jonathan Sacks, the Chief Rabbi of Britain's largest group of orthodox Jews, failed to attend the funeral.

This Thursday the Chief Rabbi is expected to make partial redress when he speaks at an evening of tribute to Rabbi Gryn. But in doing so he has angered many orthodox rabbis who regard the late rabbi's brand of reform Judaism as



pected at the ticket-only meeting at the Congress Hall, central London. Organised by the non-religious Board of Deputies of British Jews, the event is intended as a secular memorial. The speakers will not only in-

Harries, and Rabbi Tony Bayfield, who heads the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain.

But, by attempting to bring people together from all sides, the memorial has become a fo-cal point for a bitter debate on relations between the traditional orthodox and the liberal reform branches of the Jewish community. The position of the Chief Rabbi is at the heart of the matter.

clude the Chief Rabbi, but

Hugo Gryn's son, David, to-gether with the Bishop of Ox-

ford, the Right Rev Richard

In shunning the funeral, and then attending the tribute, the Chief Rabbi has been walking a tightrope that many on both sides believe is an unsustainable position.

He is often regarded as the leader of British Jews and is, for example, the only Jewish leader at the annual remembrance ceremony at the Cenotaph. Yet his United Synagogue attracts only 40 per cent of the country's 290,000 or so Jews.

By sitting alongside reformers on Thursday – and justifying the decision by pointing to Rabbi Gryn's important interfaith work - he will earn disapproval from his own side. Yet, if he fails to attend, the schism with reformers could be irreparable and his authority

Neville Nagler, the Board of Deputies' director-general, said that they hoped all sections of the community would come. "It's a meeting, not a religious service, and most people seem to find that quite acceptable." he said.

But not everyone. Rabbi Isaac Sufrin, an ultra-orthodox Lubavitch, said he would not Thursday.'

"adjudicate" on what the Chief Rabbi did. However, Rabbi Gryn had been a reformer and "if Judaism means anything then nobody can change it! cannot give credibility to something which I believe goes against the truth. All that I believe was given to us through

Moses from God on Mount However, David Walsh, vicepresident of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, said he would be very pleased to see Rabbi Sacks at the meeting. Any divisions, he stressed, were within the orthodox community, not between the liberals and the traditionalists.

Yet he thought it very sad that the United Synagogue of the Chief Rabbi - which, he said, contained "very much middle of the road people" - felt unable to take part in any service alongside the reformed syna-

gogues. Rabbi David J Goldberg, chairman of the Rabbinic Conference of progressive rabbis, said it was "ridiculous" that the orthodox should claim not to "recognise" the reform wing when it had been around for 200

This is where the fight is going to start - because we're not looking for acknowledgement.

I find it unacceptable and bizarre that a person who has the allegiance of only 40 per cent of the people can be tout-ed as a spokesman for Jewry." However, he recognised that the Chief Rabbi was now in a

difficult position. "If I were a betting man," he said, "I would be inclined to put a small wager on a diplomatic illness between now and

DAILY POEM

On hesitating to depict my grandmother

By Gillian Allnutt

She must have alighted like a bird into Bertha Elizabeth. of John King, Gentleman, late of Hartest, hard

by Sudbury. Late of London, now, her body lies alone, eludes me, bone of her impenetrable bone. Her soul – I wouldn't sentimentalise.

Her stone's among the stones of gentlemen within the wall, the toll of bell, bird-chortle. But she's flown.

This poem is from Gillian Allnutt's fourth collection, Nantucket and the Angel (Bloodaxe, £6.95). The poems trace the spiritual biographs of the poet's "imagined 90-year-old self" and is "dominated by powerful old women, including the mystic Julian of Norwich".

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is due to close shortly.

confound the critics

for best

musicals

Arts News Editor

Two musicals which graphically illustrate the often huge divide between critical acclaim and public taste received major recognition last night at the Laurence Olivier awards.

First, there was vindication for Sir Cameron Mackintosh, whose much troubled musical Martin Guerre won the best new musical award. It also won best theatre choreographer award for Bob Avian. The show was revamped after poor notices, but Sir Cameron always claimed the public had warmed to the show more than the

Tommy, a musical adaptation of The Who's rock opera, won



Janet McTeer: Best actress

duction award. Its director, Des McAnuff, won best director, and it also won best lighting designer for Chris Parry. This was one example of where even the theatregoers on the Olivier panel chose a show which the public generally did not warm to in sufficient numbers. Tommy

In a glittering night at theatre's premier awards ceremony, the actress Janet McTeer completed an extraordinary week, winning the Laurence Olivier Award for best actress for her rivetting portrayal of Prince of Homburg.

days after American Equity cancelled the production's transfer to Broadway.

American Equity agreed to Miss McTeer going, but refused to take three of her male costars saying the parts could be played by American actors. Miss McTeer won the best actress award, beating off competition from Vanessa Redgrave, Diana Rigg and Eileen Atkins.

But the play which scooped a hatful of awards was the National Theatre's Stanley, Pam Gem's play about the artist play, best actor for Antony Sher, best supporting actress for Deborah Findlay, and best set designer for Tim Hatley. Sir Richard Eyre, the de-

parting director of the Nation-Theatre, received Laurence Olivier Award for

There was well-deserved triumph for ART, the poignant comedy by Yashima Reza, which won best comedy.

Best actor in a musical was Robert Lindsay for his Fagin in Oliver, while Maria Friedman won best actress in a musical for her performance in Passion. Trevor Eve won the award for best supporting actor for his role in Uncle Vanya, and Clive Rowe was best supporting performance in a musical for Guys and Dolls. Tim Goodchild was best costume designer for The Relapse at the Royal Shakespeare

The best new dance production was English National Ballet's Cinderella, the outstanding achievement in dance award went to Rambert Dance for their season at the London Coliserm: the best new opera production was English National Opera's Tristan And Isolde, and the outstanding achievement in opera went to Elgar Howarth for conducting ENO's Die Soldaten and The



Olivier Awards: Tommy wins top prize in spite of early closure and Martin Guerre triumphs after revamp



Rave reviews that can lead to death notice

Cannen may be not be quite a musical, and according to many critics the current production at the Royal Albert Hall is not quite an opera. The reviews last week described it as "cheapskate", "low-grade" and "thirdrate - a diserace

But audiences, many of them new to opera, seem to have enjoyed the show put on by impresario Raymond Gnbbay, and the number of performances has been extended so that as many as 50,000 people will be able to

see the production.
Yesterday Mr Gubbay said: "I think I will simply not invite the critics next year when we stage the next opera. What is the point? They take up seats to rubbish us. And the public ignore them anyway ... and enjoy

Last night's Laurence Oliver Awards highlighted the fact that there is a gulf between critical opinion of many of the big shows and the public's acclaim

The Oliviers stand alone among the awards ceremonies in having a large representation of ordinary theatregoers on the

voting panels.

Whereas panels consisting only of critics often make judge-ments baffling to the public (such as Mike Leigh's Secrets And Lies being denied any prize at the Evening Standard British Film Awards earlier this month), the Olivier Awards for theatre give the public's view and this can be strikingly at odds

with that of the experts. The shortlist for best new musical consisted of Passion, Nine and Martin Guerre. Passion and Martin Guerre went on to feaWhere the critics and the public were at odds Shows the critics gave Shows the critics loved but

Les Misérables Chartie Girl

ture on the shortlists of several other categories; including awards for acting, choreography and set design. Yet the critics gave mixed re-

views to Stephen Sondheim's Passion. And The Daily Telegraph punned after the first night of Martin Guerre: "It's not magnifique but c'est le guerre continuing in plainer English: "The result is a terrible tendency to humourless portentousness

City of Angels Sweeney Todd She Loves Me La Cage Aux Folies

> in both music and script." Producers are keen to stress that musicals, more than any other form of theatre, need time to develop. Both Martin Guerre and Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sunset Boulevard reworked and improved within months of opening.

There is no easy answer for the critics, who have to review the opening of a show rather than see it after its first six months. But the public cer- charming vignettes, it doesn't retainly appear to rely on words ally go anywhere." The public of mouth, recommendations from friends and their own gut Sir Cameron Mackintosh,

Les Misérables, feels very strong- around. City of Angels, a soly that critics can be out of tune phisticated and witty musical with the public, particularly with musicals. "Les Miserables at its Barbican première in 1985 got a very lukewarm reception by the critics," he said. It is not just contemporary events which prove him right.

When Cats opened in 1981 one paper wrote: "... Strange how potent cheap music is, said Noel Coward. And cheap, I'm afraid, is the right word of Mr Llovd Webber's music. Another decided: "It can't

match West Side Story or Chorus Line, because though it tries to be more than a series of

ignored the critics and made up its own mind. The gulf between profes-

sional reviewers and public producer of Martin Guerre and also works the other way about Hollywood life, won enormous critical acclaim when it opened in the West End a few years ago, but the lack of tunes and poignant love story did not endear it to the public. Such musicals stand in

something of a grand tradition. The show pithily and publicly denounced on its opening by film director Mike Todd with the words "No Gals, No Gags. No Chance." The show in question was Oklahoma which went on to become one of the hest-loved musicals of all time.

Nobel winner may sue over gay baby abortion claim

Steve Boggan and Glenda Cooper

The Nobel prize-winning scientist who discovered DNA yesterday threatened to sue over a newspaper report claiming he advocated the termination of foetuses carrying a

have the right to abort for any reason, including dyslexia, a genetic lack of musical ability or even being too short to play bas-

Dr Watson, who with his colleague Francis Crick, discovered the double helix in 1953, said he "gay gene".

But in the same breath, Dr
James Watson, 69, told The

had been quoted out of context
in a Sunday Telegraph article
headlined: "Abort babies with

gay genes, says Nobel winner." His comments provoked outrage in the gay community and among pro-lifers. However, his justification of them appeared to lead him into more extreme

"During an interview, I was asked about homosexuality and I related a story about a woman who felt her life had been ruined because her son was a ho-

have grandchildren," he said. "I simply said that women in that situation should have a choice over whether or not to abort. I didn't say that foetuses found to have a gay gene should be aborted."

But when asked where societv should draw the line over abortion, he replied: "Society

they want one, irrespective of whether there is a disease. I am pro-choice and I believe men and committees should play no part in women's decisions.

"I don't see where you can draw the line. Some people might not want a child who is dyslexic. A woman could say that some day, if a gene were

mosexual and she would never have the right to an abortion if and her child didn't have it, she might want to abort.

> do not want my child to be short because I love basketball and he'll be too short to play. There could be 1,000 different reasons and many of them we would consider absurd. But I believe a woman should be able to walk into a clinic for an abortion and not have the state interfere."

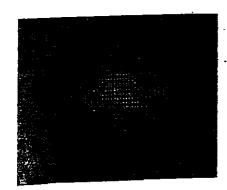
Gay rights groups and pro-lif-ers reacted angrily to Dr Wat-son's remarks. Nick Partridge of the Terrence Higgins trust de-

scribed them as "outrageous". Professor Jack Scarisbrick, Director of the pro-life charity Life, said the idea was a "horrible suggestion. All abortion is an offence to the right to life of a child and a violation of a mother," he said. "To do this beterrible discrimination. A spokesman for the De-

partment of Health said that it would not be legal to abort a child on the grounds of future orientation: "Should a gene for homosexuality be identified. this alone could not be used under the Abortion Act to justify abortion".

BT

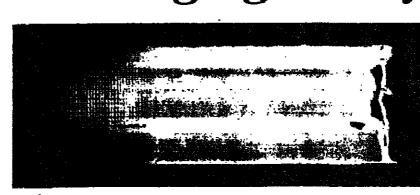
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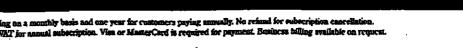
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The Gospel according to Swampy

Issues take precedence over politics for young people, survey shows

Disillusioned with politics and alienditional democratic process, according to a report published today.

Although young people (18- to 24year-olds) represent a section of the electorate significant enough to swing marginal votes, only 40 per cent are likely to vote at the general election a figure that slumps as low as 14 per cent among the black population.

While young people are more likely than their elders to participate in voluntary work, they are turning their backs on mainstream politics and the established forms of participation. As shown by the emergence of individuals like tunneller Swampy and 16year-old activist "Animal" in the recent anti-roads protests in Devon and elsewhere, the youth of today is more likely to get involved in direct action. They

Thoughts of youth

What cor		losest	to you	view on
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believe that getting involved in politics does not make a difference - and that those that do get involved do so for the wrong motives.

The report - entitled The Kids are Alright? and compiled by London Youth Matters - will be launched to-

that Thatcher's children have more faith in Chris Evans and Gary Lineker as role models for their finances. The ated from the system, young people of the Exchequer came today are turning their back on the traequal bottom with Mystic Meg. with the support of only one in a bundred

young people.

Bernard Donoghue, chair of London Youth Matters, the umbrella organisation for youth organisations in the capital, asked: "As politicians launch for the nearest camera crew. and young people become the soft target for those wanting to jump on the moral bandwagon, who is to provide a positive spin for a scapegoat generation? Someone has to ensure that their voice is heard, and ensure that the system makes an attempt to reconnect with them," he said.

In 1993, a survey by Social and Community Planning Research showed that 8 per cent of the total UK population had no interest in politics. The equivalent figure for young people in the Youth in Politics survey from 1995, quoted by The Kids Are Alright?,

shows that the equivalent figure for young people is 24 per cent.
Young people's definitions of politics vary, however: 58 per cent of 22 to 25-year-olds believe politics are about things that affect their lives; 20 per cent say that politics are what goes politics means nothing to them.

Individual issues tended to stir young people more than getting involved in politics generally: 73 per cent said they supported help for the homeless, 71 per cent rights for the disabled, 66 per cent the NHS, and 64 per cent animal rights.

Thirty two per cent said they had protested and 13 per cent were in favour of damage in support of animal rights. Other issues they cared about included support for single parents (56 per cent), employment issues (55 per cent), combating pollution (54 per cent), cracking down on nuclear pow-er/weapons (52 per cent) and women's right to abortion (50 per cent).

Ouoting a survey by Volunteer Centre UK (1991), the report argues that it is unfair to suggest that just because young people do not participate in mainstream politics they are apathetic. In the survey, 55 per cent of 18-24 year-olds had done some form of voluntary activity in the previous year. compared with 51 per cent of the



Register to vote and naff up your ballots?

Daniel Hooper – better known as of tunnel and putting up a treethe roads protester Swampy - has a vote, but he has no intention of using it, writes Clare Garner.

He doesn't believe in voting: all politicians are as bad as each other and by voting for any of them he would be endorsing what is, in his view, a bankrupt system.

Election day on a road protest site will be the same as any other day for 23-year-old Swampy, who came to fame during the A30 evictions at Fairmile in Devon last month. "I'll probably be having some breakfast. house," he said yesterday. "I don't feel that any of the parties represent my opinion at all and I don't agree with the political system. If you put people in power they generally get corrupted by power, as is quite clear from seeing the corruption that's around at the moment."

Whilst he admits it would would "quite nice" to see the back of the Conservatives, he doesn't believe Labour would be any better. "I don't believe it would make any difference," he said. "For instance, most

now donating money to the other side [Labour], so they are going to be just as corrupt. Take the Criminal Justice Act. Labour has never said they're going to stop that one. They just sit on the fence because they don't want to upset people and lose votes."

It is, he feels, time for the country to turn its back on the political system and prompt change through direct action. "The best way to deal with politicians is to fight them, but at the same time ignore them," he said. "They can't rule our

system is going to break down. Now more than ever, people are ignoring them and they don't feel as powerful as they did before.

"People aren't interested any more in what politicians have got to say. We're only actively encouragto vote and naff up your voting papers en masse.'

In Swampy's book, politicians have only themselves to blame for the state of the country. "The amount of damage they are doing is phenomenal." he said. "How the

more people do that, the more the hell can they blame that on young people - or anyone else for that matter. I mean, they're destroying the planet left, right and centre, they're pumping pollution into the air, they're sending people to war, and it's all about money.

But, he added, being young in the Nineties is not all bad. "It's exciting times in a way because there are a lot of things going on and we can make a change if people get active now. Rather than voting it would be better if everyone took their own action. I think we can change things



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Big union deal offers Blair hope of public sector peace

Labour Editor

One of the biggest union deals in the history of British industrial relations could grant an incoming Labour government industrial peace among 1.5 million public sector workers.

The historic agreement, which attempts to abolish the occupational apartheid between men and women, and white collar and manual employees, is set to be signed next month on behalf of local authorities throughout the country.

The "single status" deal follows 18 months of negotiations and Labour's assertion that it would stick to the present strict financial targets in the public sector. Many observers predicted that a Blair administration would face strikes by

industrial peace for two, or even three, years in a large chunk of the state sector.

Among the main concessions from management is the introduction of a 37-hour week for blue collar workers in 1999 – 36 hours in London, when unions hope a Labour government will countenance extra funding for the public sector. The clause on hours would bring the working time of manual employees into line with office personnel.

Unions and management expect the accord to be signed on 10 March, when an annual pay offer, possibly matching the present inflation rate of 2.8 per cent, will be tabled. Such an offer would take the £3.82-perhour "national minimum wage" of council workers above the

ship" with the national bodies representing councils, which aims to improve the quality of work and the flexibility with which it is undertaken. Under the the accord there will be one pay "spine" for staff and man-ual workers and one national negotiating table for all employees, instead of two.

volved, Unison, the Transport

& General and the GMB, are

Councils will be able to decide where individual grades fit on the national wage scale. Unions have, therefore, agreed to potentially large variations in the wages paid for any particular grade. The drive to equalise the

pay and conditions of men and women has been forced on the

workers whose aspirations had been raised. This pact could buy The three main unions in ing county, district and metroing county, district and metropolitan authorities by legal action and the threat of more entering into a "social partner- to come. Unions will drop thonsands of industrial tribunal cases as a result of the agreement.

As part of the framework. councils will evaluate jobs to ensure those of "equal value" will carry the same pay and conditions. Part-time women workers will be among the beneficiaries. Senior Labour Party figures are making concerted efforts to avert the complete shutdown of the London Underground system by electricity supply engineers protesting over plans to remove them from the compaanxious there should not be industrial unrest in the run-up to

the election which draw atten-

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Broadmoor hospital has hundreds of porn videos were cover searching patients and launched an investigation into how pornographic videos en-tered a rehabilitation ward.

The high security hospital, which houses Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe, has rejected allegations that a child pornog-

raphy ring is in operation. Claims made by a Sunday newspaper that patients at Broadmoor are harbouring

described as "untrue" yesterday. The chief executive Alan Francy admitted that during routine searches staff some-

times found unacceptable material but said: "There is no evidence at all of a child pornography ring at Broadmoor Hospital ... we are a setheir rooms."

A spokesman confirmed that two videos seized during a search of patients' rooms on Friday night contained pornographic material, although he refused to release any details.

The search was conducted following allegations of child cure environment and that is abuse and a pornography why we have policies which supply at Ashworth hospital in

Merseyside. The videos at Broadmoor were discovered a rehabilitation ward, where the patients are allowed to own possessions denied to other pa tients, and where the ratio of staff to patients is relatively low. Their discovery led to the seizure of several hundred videos and a number of computer disks from the 30-patient

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ampy Business

ploughs a green furrow to safeguard national parkland

Stephen Goodwin Heritage Correspondent

The mountaineer Sir Chris Bonington and the environmentalist Sir Jonathon Porritt are backing a radical green agenda for Britain's national parks involving private funding energy-saving landscape-protection schemes, chemical-free farming and

reduced car use. As the parks struggle with budget cuts and a myriad of commercial and people pressures, the Council for National Parks (CNP) - the charity which fought for their establishment nearly 50 years ago - is trying to set a fresh agenda for England and Wales's finest countryside. It wants the 11 park authorities to work more closely with companies to head off damaging changes and for Whitehall departments to demonstrate their own "duty of care". It also repeats the demand for national park status for the South Downs and the New Forest.

Sir Chris, the CNP president, stressed the importance of get-ting across messages which made "links between urban

beautiful rural areas". He added that the CNP had been trying to get board-level commitments to national parks.

Sir Jonathon warned that the pressures of modern lifestyles could bring "dramatic and irreversible cha the landscape, wildlife and caltural heritage of the parks".

Damaging treads identified by the CNP study included

lines of pylons and even the proliferation of wind turbines, in pollution of water with nitrates, stone for road aggregates and Army war games.

The council wants to see the fund the UK's largest lake clean-up project; in the Lake District, where North West Water is helping tackle nutrient enrichment; Northumberland where North-

ern Electric is partnering a £40,000 energy-saving scheme. In the Peak District, electricity lifestyles and the impacts on companies have spent £1m over

the tast 15 years on a 50-50 deal with the park to bury power ca-bles underground in areas

salaries of a number of rangers. in exchange for their logo appearing on park vehicles. Privately, national park offi-

years but point out that companies are keener to offer logo-blazing sponsorship with a good PR pay-back than they are to ac-cept curbs on quarrying and

council for failing to find new solutions to the problems of coping with the millions of visitors and their cars. Subsidised

The Government estimates that more than 100 million visits are made to national parks travel by car. The Lake Destrict each year. But a recent study by runs the Peak a close second.

been operating in some parks - consultants Deloitte & Touche concluded that the annual tigure for the Peak District alone could be 31 million - and most

Shops may be granted power to arrest and fine thieves

Crime Correspondent

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ctor pea

Mark CiMP HI

Retailers should be given new powers to arrest and fine shoplifters under proposals to reduce the involvement of the police and courts in the crime. The Lord Chancellor's de-

partment, the police, insurers and shopkeepers are considering new ways of clamping down on retail crime, which costs an estimated £2bn a year. Under the proposed civil re-covery scheme, retailers would

recoup between £60m and £123m a year from shoplifters with an average fine and compensation of about £200 per

The measures, contained in a report from the Social Market Foundation, an independent think tank, are a response to the spiraling number of shop crimes which result in a tiny number of convictions and fines.

The moves, while having the qualified support of many large retailers, have met with oppo-sition from police chiefs, smaller retail outlets, and lawyers who fear civil recovery could lead to the decriminalisation of retail crime, allow rich people to buy themselves out of trouble, and lead to a violent backlash from offenders.

The proposed scheme would mirror compensation recovery schemes carried out in most American states. Joshua Bamfield, director of the Centre for Retail Research, and author of the new study Making Shoplifters Pay: Retail Civil Recovery, argues that out of 1.7 million people apprehended last year, less than 10 per cent appeared before courts, or were

cautioned by police. Under his proposals new leg-islation should be introduced to allow retailers to recover comsation via civil means, rather like a small claims issue. This would allow retailers who caught thieves, many of whom are shop staff, to demand damages or a "civil tort".

A possible system would be to fine the offender two-andhalf times the value of the stolen goods, up to a maximum of £250, add a fine of between £80 and £200, plus costs. For example, if a shoplifter stole goods worth £30, he or she would pay £75 for the value of the goods, a fine of £80, and £80 costs, a total of £235. These penalties would double for

thieves who are members of staff Parents of juveniles caught stealing could also face fines. Britain could also copy the US by making some experi-enced security staff "peace officers" or Special Constables and giving them limited powers

Mr Bamfield believes between 35 per cent and 55 per cent of people would pay, which could raise about £90m a year. If people refuse to pay, retailers or police could take out a criminal or civil prosecution. At present most cases are dis-

continued because they are too expensive and time consuming for what are often tiny sums of The report concludes: "Civil recovery will never be the total answer to retail crime, but could well be an important new tool for retailers - it may deter

shop thieves and provide some

recompense to shopkeepers." Reaction to the proposals has been mixed. The report says that large retailers, such as supermarkets, are generally in favour of the idea although a spokesman for the British Retail Consortium, which represents 90 per cent of the country's retailers said yesterday that it would not support anything that operated outside the courts, but said a fast track system was desperately needed. Small shopkeepers are worried about being targeted by disgruntled and the Association of could result in fewer thieves being prosecuted as well as de-

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THE BIG NETWORK.



Belgrade

threatens

freedom

of foreign

media

Belgrade — The government warned foreign journalists over their reporting of Serbia's political crisis yesterday as opposition parties girded for a battle with the authorities over

The Zajedno (Together)

coalition, whose street protests

forced the government to recognise its election victories in Serbia's main towns, has

threatened to resume demon-

strations unless media controls

cess to the state media will be

crucial to their chances of beat-

ing the ruling Socialist Party (SPS) in parliamentary and presidential elections this year.

The warning to foreign jour-nalists by Information Minister

Radmila Milentijevic suggests

the government will not give

daily Politika: "We must espe-

cially hold [foreign journalists]

correct, we should react and de-

mand the untruth be corrected."

Ms Milentijevic, a newly appointed loyalist to President
Slobodan Milosevic, added: "In

view of the force and influence

the media exert on the shaping

of public opinion and govern-ment policy, their responsibili-ty is exceptional." In its last

She told the pro-government

ground without a fight.

Zajedno leaders believe ac-

are relaxed by 9 March.

Donald Forbes

press freedom.

Reuters

Berisha rejects Albanians' demands

Tirana (Reuter) — Furious Albanian investors staged more protests yesterday, ignoring the government's suggestions to shrug off millions of dollars in losses from failed pyramid investment schemes and to get

Several thousand protesters marched through the southern towns of Fier and Vlora, chanting anti-government slogans and demanding compensation

In Vlora, where the Gjallica scheme went bust and wiped out the savings of many residents, about 2,000 people carried the picture of a protester who was shot dead last week.

In Fier, another 2,000 people staged a protest, denouncing President Sali Berisha and carrying local opposition Socialist Party leader Petro Koci through the town on their shoulders.

In Tirana, police put on a show of force to ensure a rally called by the main opposition Forum for Democracy yesterday

did not take place. Police vans cruised the area and officers made sure people did not loiter near the football stadium where the rally was due to be held. Officers forced customers in nearby cafés out into the rain to make sure if any of them were potential protesters they would disperse or get wet.

Mr Berisha admitted on Saturday it had been a mistake to use riot police against protesters and said protests would be allowed in Tirana if organisers

the government is still loathe to let demonstrations take place in the capital and was hoping protests in the countryside would diminish.

Mr Berisha said on Saturday that the government had warned the public too late about the dangers of the unregulated schemes. But he said responsibility also lay with those who had put millions of dollars into the high-interest schemes

- and lost everything.

He said the state had no intention of reimbursing hun-dreds of thousands of Albanians who lost their savings and often sold valuables or property to invest in the schemes.
"We will not take this debt on

our shoulders. No democratic government would do this. It would be cheating, printing money to pay and creating hy-perinflation", he said. Mr Berisha acknowledged many Albanians were bomeless.

having sold homes to join a frenzy of investing in the schemes which paid interest of 60 per cent or more a month.

Albania has been swept by demonstrations and riots since five high-risk schemes collapsed last month. Investors blame the government for failing to warn them of the dangers of the schemes, which said they were building tourist resorts, supermarkets and petrol stations but were pocketing the cash. Bankers estimate \$1 (£600m) to \$2bn may have been poured



responsible for what they write. Pointing the finger: An anti-government protest over the pyramid selling scandal attracted 2,000 people in Fiere yesterday Photograph: Reuters This means that if they write something which is not factually

Tories were warned about crooked regime

Anthony Bevins Political Editor

repeated warnings about their links with Albania's ruling De-

Following Commons allegations about the "gangster state" of President Sali Berisha, London sources said yesterday that the Tories were asked to investigate allegations being made about the dictatorial tendencies

The Conservatives have onsored a number of financial aid projects for the Democratic Party, under the auspices the Westminster Foundation for Democracy - a crossparty organisation that receives about £2.5m in annual grant from the Foreign Office.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats have also given assistance to partner parties in Albania, financed by funds the

But after complaints had been made about last May's Albanian elections, the Foundation obtained copies of reports from the Organisation for Secarity and Cooperation in Euging and intimidation by Pres-

ident Berisha's party machine ource said yesterday that after those allegations had been discussed, one Conservative project was approved on con-

dition that the party should log its concerns with President Berisha's party colleagues.

It was also agreed that the Tories should carry out their own investigation into the democratic commitment of the Albanian Democratic Party before putting forward any further projects requiring West-minster Foundation funding.

In one discussion, a Tory representative said that President Berisha had spoken of his amazement that Labour and the Liberal Democrats were providing more Westminster Foundation finance for his political opponents than the Conservatives were offering to his

The Foundation's governing body decided that the situation should be kept under review-with an implicit warning that the Conservatives should be careful if they wished to continue funding a party which had become essentially undemoc-

crackdown on the foreign me-dia in 1994, at the height of the war in Bosnia, Serbia refused to renew the accreditations of almost 20 foreign journalists.
Although Serbia has no censorship, the main broadcast and print media are under strict

state control. Independent radios have limited range and the government rations the supply of newsprint to independent newspapers and magazines. The limited reporting by state television on three months of Zajedno and student demon-

strations against SPS attempts to rig the local election results was hostile to the opposition. The opposition called off

demonstrations on Saturday but set a new deadline. A Za jedno leader. Zoran Djindjic, told supporters: "Let us give them a chance to show an intention to free the media and, if they fail to do that by 9 March, what else can we do but go out into the streets again?"

Belgrade students who have also held daily protests said they would continue their demon-strations until the government sacked the university rector and prosecuted those responsible for annulling the local

election results.



Catherine Deneuve: Ready to go to jail over new law

French stars join fight against ultra-right

John Lichfield

Over 400 French actors - including star week, which tightens existing restricabelle Huppert, Miou-Miou and Jeanne Moreau - yesterday declared themselves ready to go to jail if the government pursues new curbs on illegal

The declaration follows similar petitions from other branches of the French intelligentsia: 58 cinema directors, 300 writers, 300 theatrical figures and 1,200 journalists and lawyers. Three more round robins, threatening deliberately to flout the proposed new law - from doctors, scientists and cartoonists - will be published in Libération today.

finalised in the National Assembly next when his guests leave. tions on illegal immigration. In particular, the country's cultural and intellectual élite objects to a clause which would oblige anyone housing a non-touristic, non-European Union

the local authority. The suggestion is that this would turo France into a nation of informers and smacks of the kind of registration of Jews which was imposed by the Vichy regime during the Second World War. In fact, most of the provisions in the law have existed for 15 years and were originally introduced,

by decree, by a Socialist government

foreigner to obtain a certificate from

The ostensible object of the intel- in 1982. The only new requirement is the admission of those organising the lectual revolt is a draft law, due to be that the host must tell the authorities protests, they are mostly aimed at the to cut the ground from under the FN

ter, Jean-Louis Debré, pointed out lowing its victory in Vitrolles, near Maryesterday in the Journal de Dimanche, there will be no jail sentences for French people who break the law. They will simply be banned from hold-

ing "lodging certificates" in future. EU citizens and visitors from other countries, such as the US, who require no visa, do not fall under the regula-tions. The new – and old – laws apply to other foreigners with no right of res-idence or obvious means of support in France, Mr Debré said. They can only that they have somewhere to stay. Why, then, such a great furore? By

seilles, last week. It may be true that the intelligentsia should have objected to the immigration laws before now, say the petition organisers. But a halt must be called at some time to what they call the creeping "Le Pen-isation" of French politics. The motivation be-

hind the new law - and the kinds of words used by parliamentarians from the centre-right majority when they made it even tougher in the National Assembly - were pure Front Nationwere struck out last week by the upper chamber of parliament, the Sénat).

Mr Debré retorts that the best way when his guests leave.

Furthermore, as the Interior Minisand xenophobic Front National, folwhich damages the interests of legitimate immigrants and French citizens alike. Other commentators point out that Mr Le Pen will be delighted by the protests: they come from just the social élites which the FN accuses of betraying France.

An uneasy truce may be declared when the law comes back to the national assembly next week. The Prime Minister Alain Juppé let it be known yesterday that he would not withdraw the offending "lodging" clause. But he also hinted that he expected supportenter if they have a certificate showing al, the critics say. (The amendments ers of his own centre-right government to make no attempt to restore their FN-inspired amendments.

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Civil War Picassos to join 'Guernica'

Madrid's modern art museum, the Reina Sofia Art Centre, has bought seven important works by Picasso from the artist's family at a price reckoned to be nearly half their market value, filling an important gap in the museum's collection.

The acquisition of two drawings, two sculptures and three oil paintings crowns two years of negotiations during which three big Spanish banks put up the cash for the purchase -£15m - in lieu of paying tax. The

ment Picasso's cry of grief and rage, Guernica, jewel of the Reina Sofia's collection.

Claude Picasso, the artist's grandson, said recently that the family was prepared to negoti-ate the sale of other works to the museum, despite having neither the need nor the inclination to part with any of the enormous quantity of material still in family hands.

Madrid has long felt sore about being last in the queue for important Picassos. The bulk of the artist's work, from his young

pieces date from the Civil War and old period, is in the Picas-vears of the 1930s and comple-Barcelona. The Reina Sofia has tried to fill a gap by acquiring works from the artist's middle years, but recognises it will never be able to match the

other collections.

Untypically for Spain,
"Operation Picasso" – the Socialists' most ambitious cultural project - survived last year's change in government, and the former culture minister, Carmen Alborch, attended the un-veiling last week to remind everyone that it had been her

idea. Astonishingly, her con-

servative successor, Esperanza Aguirre, thanked her for the ini-

The Guernica painting itself is at the heart of a tug-of-war between the Reina Sofia and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, a futuristic building by the American architect Frank Gehry due to open this summer. The Guggenheim wants to borrow Picasso's homage to the bombed Basque village as part of its in-augural exhibition, but the Reina Sofia says the painting is too fragile to be moved. A spoke woman said this week the museum had received no formal

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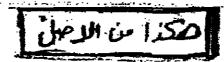
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Danes agonise over the meaning of Europe

In the first of a series on Denmark, Sarah Helm examines the nature of its scepticism

"I think what we need," said Ole Krarup, concluding a long tirade against the European Union, "is a kind of revolution." "I don't mean a socialist revolution," adds Danes have been betrayed. We have said 'No'. Yet the politicians are back again ask-

ing us to say yes. And still they don't tell us what their European Union is for."

Mr Krarup, who is also a member of the European Parliament – a stalwart of the same anti-European party in Strasbourg as Sir James Goldsmith – is about to launch his revolution in court. He is to represent 12 Danes, including a trades unionist and a musician, who are challenging Den-mark's constitutional right to give up sowereign powers to the EU. The case is adding to the ferment over Denmark's EU mem-bership, which is once again dominating the country's political agenda.

Almost five years ago Denmark stunned the rest of Europe by saying "no" to the Maastricht treaty in a referendum which



produced a vote of 50.7 per cent against.
Only after Dasish leaders had returned to only anter Dunan leaders had returned to the EU negotiating table, and won four "opt onts", did the population switch their vote, grudgingly, to a "yes". The Danes won opt-outs from monetary union, immigra-tion and justice policy, European citizen-thingules and defeare connection

ain rules and defence co-operation. Now, the country is heading for another bout of soul-searching. A new EU treaty, giving away more national sovereignty, is due to be signed in Amsterdam in June.

before ratification. If Danes vote "no" again, the future of

the union could be thrown into disarray. By failing to ratify, Denmark would prevent implementation of the new treaty across Europe, thereby blocking further integration and stalling the process of enlargement. The social democrat-led coalition gov-

enument is largely in favour of tying Denmark closer to the union. "We will certainly take a beating if we stay out of the single

currency," says Niels Helveg Petersen, the pro-European Foreign Minister.

But after the shock of Maastricht, which demonstrated the danger of ignoring pulhictant to take a lead in the debate. All the polls show Danes are as sceptical today as they ever were. They, like the British, lear loss of sovereignty. But the Danes believe Britain distrusts Europe because it knows it cannot exercise its super-power ambitions

Denmark, by contrast, takes a pride in the fact that it has no such vaulting ambitions. Rather, small, righteous Denmark fears it

might be trampled on by bigger states.
Unlike Britain, Danes fear that EU social standards will be weaker - not tougher - than standards in Denmark, where gay priests can marry (though not yet in a church) and where the state health system refunds the cost of a holiday, should a Dane fall ill abroad.

The Danish government is in a quandary

protesters clash during the 1992 referendum on the Maastricht treaty Photograph: AFP

about how to explain what Europe is "for". Uffe Elleman Jensen, the former foreign minister, ousted after the 1992 "no" wite, still talks of the need to promote the EU as a means to plack German helsem as and muntain European peace. "We are still threat-ened by imbalances of power," he warns.

But many Danes see such arguments as dated. The government intends to use a different line to promote a "yes" vote in Amsterdam by explaining that the EU is "for" enlargement to the cast, hoping this will give the project moral underpinning. But enlargement means little to most Danes, ex-

cept the risk of more immigration. There are signs that more liberal opin-ion formers in Denmark may be shifting owards EU support. Young moderates with it used to be the "decent" thing to be against but now it is "decent" to be pro. The farright are hijacking the anti European

agenda, producing a backlash. Big business is strongly behind European monetary union. There is still, however, widespread evidence that ordinary people are deeply sceptical. Ask a taxi driver or a waiter whether they are against the union. and the chances are they will reply: "Yeh, sure" - as if to say: "It's obvious, rai't it?" Tomorrow: The Danes and immigration

significant shorts

Albright and Italy agree on Nato expansion

The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and Italian leaders made no progress yesterday on arguments over Iran, Libya and Cuba but were in broad agreement on Nato expansion plans, Turkey and keeping the alliance's southern military command in American hands, US officials said. The two governments also agreed on opposition to a Nato mini-summit proposed by France and that a Nato summit in July to decide new members should go ahead regardless of whether the alliance completes a charter with Russia defining a new special relationship.

Leading article, page 14

Iranian oil workers held

Iranian police in riot gear arrested busloads of oil workers who staged a demonstration at the oil ministry to press for higher wages, witnesses said.

Witnesses earlier said more than 1,000 workers from Tehran refinery, Iran's third largest, took part in the protest at the ministry in the centre of the capital as their representatives were inside the building to negotiate with officials.

Truckers appeal to Juan Carlos

Striking truck drivers in Spain called on King Juan Carlos to intervene and resolve an 11-day dispute that has caused supply shortages for factories and markets and forced some companies to halt production.

"The king is the guarantor of law and order and the only person capable of unblocking the situation," strike spokesman Jose Luis Soldevilla said, after a second round of talks with government officials ended in round of talks with government officials ended in

Opposition unite in Bulgaria

Bulgaria's Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) opposition set themselves up to win general elections in April by becoming a single party, while the country's interim cabinet took the first steps towards containing economic

"A new, united political force has emerged in the past two days which will govern the country after 19 April elections," UDF leader Ivan Kostov said. Reuters - Sofia

Tajik rebels free hostages

Islamic rebels holding Russian and Western hostages in a remote mountain stronghold in Tajikistan freed five of their captives yesterday but kept the last six, whose fate

will be negotiated today.

The released, who reached a government checkpoint 50 The released, who reached a government of the capital, Dushanbe, were a Swiss military observer working with the United Nations, two Russian reporters, a Tajik interpreter and an employee of the UN Reuters – Dushanbe

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Handover countdown: As work on the colony's new airport continues apace, China tightens its grip on its territory-in-waiting

Hong Kong turns its back on Rifkind

Stephen Vines Hong Kong

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, is clearly vexed by his crash-course in the Buddhist art of clapping with a single hand. After his whirlwind weekend visit to Hong Kong it is clear that Britain's hand in the colony is relatively empty, making the visit little more than an embarrassing demonstration of British impotence.

This may be inevitable with just 19 weeks to go before China resumes sovereignty but Britain seems to be caught between stressing its long-term commitment to the territory and demonstrating its inability to achieve many of its last goals.

High on the British agenda is a rearguard action to stop China from watering down human-rights legislation and to prevent the establishment of a rival legislature. Britain has threatened to take China to the International Court of Justice to adjudicate on whether the rival body is legal, but the Chinese have refused, point blank, to go.

Mr Rifkind was repeatedly asked what action Britain would take in the face of this

cool. He turned on one Australian journalist, who suggested that Britain was not doing much, saying, "if you have anything else in mind, tell me what you suggest".

A British official later said that it was necessary "to come to terms with the loss of sovereignty and the loss of control". Clearly annoyed that the Foreign Secretary had been accused of not doing enough for Hong Kong, he said that Britain had every intention of fully exercising its sovereignty until 30 June but had to be realistic about what levers were at its disposal after that.

Arriving on Saturday evening, Mr Rifkind stated that Hong Kong policy was "the single highest priority of our interna-tional relations" - but not of sufficient priority, apparently, to prevent the visit being cut to the bone so that he could fly back to

Westminster for a crucial vote this evening. It may have been just as well he did not stay. A mere eight of the Legislative Council's 60 members bothered to attend a meeting with him, and the press conference, normally packed for a visit of this kind, was

and rather uncharacteristically lost his Kong's first post-colonial government, spent less than a hour in what turned out to be little more than a friendly but stilted chat, with both sides going through the motions. Yet Mr Rifkind insisted that in most points of handover negotiations "not only are we making progress, but most of them have been resolved". He even believed there might be a possibility that China would think again about reintroducing colonial laws which limited freedom of assembly and association.

It was hard to find a basis for Mr Rifkind's confidence. Mr Tung said yesterday that while he was prepared to listen to the public's views on these matters, "I have a set of values and beliefs which I hold on to very much". This seems a polite way of saying that the decisions are irreversible.

Britain's last hope seems to be to play the international card. Mr Rifkind stressed that Britain's allies would be called upon to assist the Government in ensuring that Sino-British agreements on Hong Kong were fully implemented. He said that Hong Kong was one of the first issues he raised with Madeleine Albright when he



only modestly attended by the local media.

Tung Chee-hwa, who will head Hong pointed United States Secretary of State.

Called to congratulate her on being appointed United States Secretary of State.

Press-ganged: Malcolm Rifkind leaves a news conference in Hong Kong yesterday

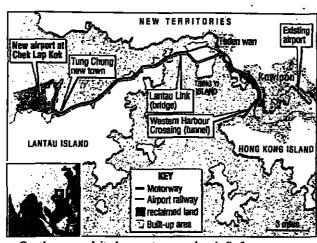
Photograph: Reuters

International lift-off delayed by disagreement and distrust

Stephen Vines

On Thursday morning a small turbo-prop Beech Super King aircraft, loaded with VIPs, will touch down on the uncompleted runway of one of the world's most expensive and politically controversial new airports.

The ceremonial flight is being made to demonstrate that construction of Hong Kong's new international airport is proceeding at a furious pace so that it can open for business by April next year. This is almost a year behind schedule but, unusually for an important infrastructure project, the delay has nothing to do with building problems and everything to do with almost five years of Sino-British wrangling over the financing of the project.



On the ground it does not seem that the airport will be finished in just 14 months. The massive 1,248-hectare site is awash in a sea of mud, broken by the

towering shell of a passenger terminal designed to handle 30 million passengers per year. Within 10 to 20 years the airport will be handling 89 million passengers a year, and 2 million tons of cargo, making it the world's busiest airport. However it will be far from being the largest - it is, for example, about half the size of Charles de Gaulle airport in

A small army of 21,000 people, speaking a babble of languages, mill around pur-posefully under the eyes of hundreds of contractors. Only at meal times do the nationalities divide into distinct groups, with the Chinese heading straight for their rice and noodles, the Brits for solid Western stodge, the Indians for curries and the Japanese for their neath constructed unch boxes.

The logistics of getting the airport built are dauming. In land-challenged Hong Kong, finding the space was problem number

ly inhabited island had to be projects. Originally the govevacuated, its hills levelled and the debris removed; 10,000 tonnes per second were shifted

at the initial site clearance stage. Because the airport is not on the mainland it had to be linked by a 1,377-metre-long suspension bridge. A new railway and highways are being built and a new town is rising next to the airport which will eventually house some 200,000 people.

The entire project is being built in a six-year time frame. Given the tight programme, no one is taking risks with cutting-edge technology. Only tried and tested methods are being employed.

The airport and its associated projects will cost some £12.5bn, making it one of the The lion's share of the business

one. As a consequence a bare- world's largest infrastructure has gone to the Japanese who dangling the carrot of an agreehave secured a quarter of the cash allocated so far. British ernment envisaged most of the companies come second, with financing coming from the pri-16 per cent and Chinese comvate sector, underwritten by panies are in the third place with state guarantees. However, Chihalf this amount. The governna, which is intensely suspicious ment insists that contracts were about Britain's plans for Hong awarded solely on merit. Kong's impressively deep cof-

Perhaps you've admired them from afar: The telecommunications firm that set a goal

large long-term financing commitments which would have to be honoured by the incoming Chinese administration. The Chinese seemed genuinely to believe that the British would use this big project as a way of eating into the coffers and funnelling money back to London. But it is hard to argue that the colonial administration

fers, would not agree to any

this. Hence there were endless talks and delays. In 1991 the Prime Minister, John Major, was forced, much against his better judgement, to become the first important Western leader to visit Peking after the Tiananmen Square massacre. The idea was to sign an agreement which would finally break the deadlock. The impasse, however, persisted for another three years but has used the airport as a way of rewarding British companies. China managed to lighten its pe-

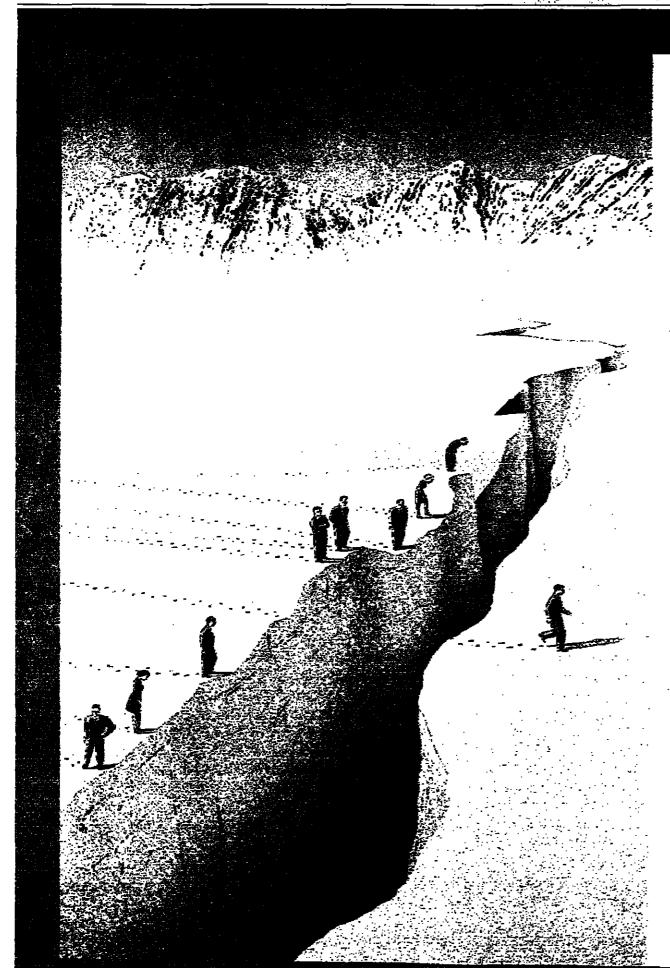
riod of diplomatic isolation by

The Chinese do not believe

ment on the airport.

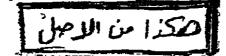
Even now China is making sure that the airport will not open before British sovereignty over Hong Kong ends. Peking did not want the territory's largest construction project open for business while Britain

was running the colony. The delay also gives China greater scope for naming the airport, a delicate subject which is rarely discussed. China may wish to have a Deng Xlaoping Airport, named after the ailing paramount leader, or Reunification Airport, reflecting the phrase China usually uses when falking about the resumption of its sovereignty in July. Alternatively the mundane name Hong Kong International Airport might be retained.



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Mystery of murdered Tibetan guru transcends the merely mortal

on its territory in the

A wrathful deity is the main suspect for three murders in Dharamsala, the Himalayan "capital" of Tibet's gov-emment-in-exile.

But Chinese-hired assassins or thieves have not been ruled out. Superintendent RK Singh, who is investigating the stabbing of Lopsang Gyatso, director of the Buddhist School of Dialectics, and his two pupils, believes the most likely motive may be a rift between mainstream Tibetan Buddhism and a fundamentalist sect which worships the deity

Dorje Shogden. After the Dalai wounded; they died en route to hos-Lama warned his devotees in May pital. Bloody footprints led to a against veneration of Shugden, cult followers in Britain and New Delhi launched a campaign against the Ti-betan leader. Gyatso, 70, was close to the Dalai Lama, and fulminated against the cult's charges that his pro-nouncement amounted to religious persecution. Gyatso received death threats over the past time months, said

a spokesman in Dharamsala. He was found dead on his bloodsoaked divan by a student bringing his tea on 4 February. His translators, Lobsang Nagawang and Nagawang Lodoe, sprawled on the floor, were

ground-floor room, but the six Tibetans questioned there said a drunken brawl had caused the maybem.

In New Delhi, six other monks were held, interrogated and freed without Shugden, a minor deity once wor-

shipped by the Dalai Lama, is often invoked for curses, and traditionally brings wealth to believers. Gyarso said that aithough worship of Shugden "bas long been seen to be harmful to the personal safety of His Holiness", the Tibetan establishment could not ban individuals from following their

preferred superstition and could only caution against such practices.

Many Tibetans fear the Chinese pprehensive about Taiwan inviting the Dalai Lama to visit, are exploit-ing divisions among his followers. Last year three suspected Chinese spies were arrested in Dharamsala. "A hired assassin could have killed the

director," said Lobsang Tenphell, an istant secretary in Dharamsala. Security for the Dalai Lama has been stepped up following the crime. "Security is always quite tight," an aide said. Besides rifle-toting Indian policeman and electronic security gates, the Nobel Peace laureate employs his

down the mountain.

According to Gareth Sparbam, a Canadian scholar, the dispute between the Shugden followers and the Tibetan government-in-exile is as much political as religious.

"Shugden is today a political symbol representing an emerging political party wedded to the idea that the final arbiters of Tibet's destiny should be monks, and that it should champion a fundamentalist version of Tibetan Buddhism as a state religion." The Dalai Lama must reject Shug-

own armed guards. Bullet-proof cars his calle government is fair and is seen are being considered for his travel to be fair amongst the Tibetan popto be fair amongst the Tibetan population at large.

An Indian travel agent who lives beside the School of Dialectics, where the murders took place, dismissed the various conspiracy theories as Chinese

"It's all about money. After 🛍, this happened a few days after the direc-tor returned from Hong Kong."

Whether the crime was a burglary gone wrong, a politically motivated assassination, or the culmination of a religious feud which spans gener-ations and incarnations, the mountain den, Dr Sparham said, "in order that retreat of Dharamsala is grieving.



Shooting heightens Korean

tension

Richard Lloyd Parry

The Korean defector crisis took a dramatic twist over the weekend when a North Korean living near Seoul was shot, apparently by agents of his for-

Police set up roadblocks after the attack on Lee Han Young, a relative of the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il. The attack appeared to be in retal-



Victim: Lee Han Young, who was seriously wounded

iation for the defection last week of Hwang Jang Yop, a senior North Korean politician, who is under police protection in the South Korean embassy in

Mr Lee was shot at close range by two men in the entrance of an apartment building on Saturday. Police said the gun used was a Belgian-made Browning, a standard weapon of North Korean agents. Neighbours who helped Mr Lee said

he muttered "Spy, spy" before losing consciousness. Surgeons failed to remove a bullet from his head and last night he was given little chance of surviving.

The South Korean cabinet met to discuss the incident and offered 50m won (£36,750) for information about the assailants. "North Korea has threatened to take hundredand thousandfold revenge for the Hwang incident," said the Prime Minister, Lee Soo Sung. "This attack shows the threat is something concrete."

Mr Lee is the nephew of a former wife of Mr Kim, and escaped to South Korea in 1982. He had been under police protection and even had plastic surgery. The attempt on his life will raise anxiety in Seoul about the extent of North Korean infiltration. Since his own attempted defection last Wednesday, Mr Hwang, 73, a member of the North Korean mitted is reposited in save ford South Korean interrogators that Pyongyang has 50,000 ac-tive spies in the South.

In Peking, groups of North outside the South Korean consulate building, where Mr Hwang was spending a fifth day. Pyongyang claims that he was kidnapped and one of its diplomats told reporters in Peking that "if the South uses force to move him to South Korea we will respond with force. We are determined to prevent them from taking him to the South." Armed Chinese police laid

spikes on the road in front of an

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day of Mr Kim; the state media published the eulogies of the "Dear Leader" but made no mention of Mr Hwang's defection. "The Great General Kim Jong Il is trusted absolutely, eternally and fully as if he were god," said the Rodong Simmun newspaper. "The Korean people regard him as their god be-

the motherland, nation and In Pyongyang, celebrations people." Celebrations included went ahead for the 55th birthperformances of dances and songs with titles like "Health to the Supreme Commander" and

"Defend the Headquarters". A North Korean diplomat in Peking said: "The Dear Leader is a pillar in our minds.

"Hwang, deep in his mind, will be thinking of this day and we believe he will celebrate it

Singapore capitalises on surrender of 1942

Richard Lloyd Parry

Singapore Lieutenant-General Arthur Percival, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Malaya, leans over the bunker conference table and takes in the news. Singapore's reservoirs have fallen into the hands of the Japanese, his men are running out of food, morale is plummeting, and the enemy is drawing closer. "Are we to go down in history as the first British force this century to surrender, gentlemen?" he asks his generals. They reluctantly signify their assent. "Well, may God have mercy on all of us."

Percival looks queasy, not only because he is about to authorise the surrender of Singapore, the Gibraltar of the East, to the Imperial Army. For the GOC, like most of the people in this bunker, is made of rub-ber - a talking, moving, animatronic dummy.

The moment Churchill called the largest capitulation in British history" has become entertainment. After two years' restoration, Percival's beadquarters, known as the Battle Box, open this morning as a hitech heritage site. Virtual-reality goggles show scenes of life as it would have been on 15 February 1942; Singaporeans dressed as Tommies guide visitors around the snack bar and souvenir shop. The first tourists this morning will pay 8 Singapore dollars (£3.50) each. And.

urday, 55 years to the minute after Percival's fateful decision, Ong Chit Chung, a historian and MP said: The ... sun set on the British Empire. We depended on the British to defend us against the invading Japanese but the British gave priority to the war effort in Europe. The lesson is that if we are not prepared ... to defend ourselves, all

← We depended on the British to defend us ... but they gave priority to the war

in Europe 9

our national efforts in building up the country we call our own will come to nought.

The timing of all this is pi-quant. In 19 weeks, Britain relinguishes control of another Asian city-state, when Hong Kong reverts to Chinese rule. Last week the Foreign Sec-

retary, Malcolm Rifkind, reassured Dr Ong's compatriots that, whatever the parallels with 1942, no British sun will be allowed to set on 30 June. "I want... to emphasise," he told a meeting the Singaporean In-stitute of Policy Studies, "that ... our interest and commitment both to Hong Kong and to Asia will remain of the highest Economically, Mr Rifkind had a good deal of evidence to back up his point. Britain is Singapore's fourth-largest foreign investor, and in the region as a whole it attracts more business than any other country in Europe. But, apart from balance-sheets, the British government has other, less easily definable ambitions: to maintain a political and even military influ-

ence in the region. It is no coincidence that, weeks before Hong Kong's re-version, British forces will put on one of their biggest inter-national parades, in the form of Ocean Wave, a naval deployment which will make a sixmonth swing through Asia.

But in these areas, far more than in trade, British ambitions are thrown into perspective by US hegemony. Nowhere is its position as the single remaining uperpower more crucial and obvious than in the Asia-Pacific region: 100,000 troops, including the Seventh Fleet, are based in Asia.

Alongside such a force. Britain's military pirouettes are little more than a sideshow. And, for all its attempts to

keep up a presence in Asia, few Asians seem to be interested. For over a year Britain has been discreetly pressing for membership of the Asean Regional Forum, a multi-lateral security conference, which includes Japan, the US, and China.

views appear a little irrelevant to some of these governments and, so far, the approach has been gently rebuffed.

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Hidden gender

Phil Johnson

Billy Tipton was a Fifties jazzman. Or so he led people to believe. And thereby hangs a play

player who played swing with the big bands of the Thirties and Forties. Though he was a journeyman musician rather than a star soloist, he performed with one of the greatest of all the major bands led by the master trombonist Jack Teagarden. In the Fifties, when big bands could no longer support themselves, Tipton formed his own trio, travelling from his home in Spokane, Washington to play nightclub engagements throughout the West. For the next 30 years, as a jobbing musician taking whatever work was available, Tipton seemed a typical example of his breed. At least until January 1989, when, aged 74, he died of a stomach ulcer, and an extraordinary secret was revealed. Billy Tipton was a woman.

The news, delivered by the owner of the funeral home, came as something of a shock to his three adopted sons. "He'll always be dad," Tipton's son John Clark was reported as saying. "But I think he something that would have explained the truth." Tipton's widow, Kitty Oakes, who had separated from him 10 years earlier, refused to talk about the mystery beyond saying: "He gave up everything. There were certain rules and regulations in those

days if you were going to be a musician."

Tipton, born Wilhemina rather than William, began his/her masquerade in the Thirties, as a means of furthering a musi-

illy Tipton was an American cal career at a time when women were azz saxophonist and piano more acceptable as vocalists than instrumentalists. Even so, there were plenty of precedents for successful female jazz musicians: Lil Armstrong and Mary Lou Williams were incorporated into some of the best bands of the time; Teagarden's sister Norma appeared as a piano soloist with her brother's band, and there were all-female orchestras like the Sweethearts of Rhythm and Ira Rae Hutton's Melodears. Whatever, Tipton evidently strapped her breasts as well as her sax for the 50-odd years of her career. While it may not be entirely coincidental that her employer, Jack Teagarden, was a notorious lush, Tipton somehow managed to live life on the road as a man, in a milieu where bandsmen would piss out of a coach window as a matter of course.

With the luxury of hindsight, the grainy newsprint photo of Tipton, posed in a publicity still with the trio, that appeared alongside the story of her death in Time magazine, now looks like nothing so much as a portrait of a female drag-artist with a JFK haircut and a cheesy grin. The group's drummer. Dick O'Neill, recalled at the time of Tipton's death that some listeners would joke that his employer's baby face and high singing voice seemed too feminine to belong to a man. "But I would almost fight anyone who said that," recalled O'Neill. "I never suspected a thing."

Though the example of Tipton appears to test the credulity of her fellow jazz



Billy Tipton plays: the girls on the album cover look longingly, but isn't there something ever so slightly strange about our Billy? © Sutcliffe News/ Features; Photograph: Hugo Glendinning the cast of 'The Slow Drag', top left, reprised

ing on the sexual politics of a genre where the freedom of the music is rarely matched by a corresponding fluidity in matters of sexual orientation. While a number of celebrated jazz musicians have been, and are, gay, coming out has always been a serious matter of breaking the macho code, and consequently a

course of action very few have taken. The Tipton case, which at the time attracted only a couple of columns in the New York Times and Time magazine ("He never went swimming with his three adopted sons" was Time's take on the subsion of the Martin Guerre myth with an added gender-bending twist. The son's call for explanation has also been heeded, albeit in a roundabout way. The film director Robert Altman has commissioned a script about the mystery, and The Slow Drag, an off-Broadway play based on Tipton's story by the writer Carson Kreitzer, receives its British premiere at Soho's Freedom Theatre this Thursday.

For Kreitzer, the figure of Tipton is less a matter of specifics than of symbolism. "The play is inspired by him," she says, but otherwise it's completely a work of fiction. The story fascinated me, but it's so easy to read something like that and make a judgement. He chose to die of a bleeding ulcer rather than reveal his gender, and the question for the play has to be how that could be the right answer."

In the play, Billy Tipton becomes Johnny Christmas, a kind of Everyman/ Everywoman figure. "He dies for our sins." Kreitzer says, "believing that you can't be a woman and love a woman, or that you can't be a woman and play izzz." Kreitzer deliberately distanced herself from the details of the Tipton story, she says, in order to use it "as a lens to look at the story of boy meets girl. Sexuality has a lot to do with it, but it is a love story m the end."

To prepare for the part of Tipton/ Christmas, the actress Nikki Slade has been spending time looking at old Hollywood movies. "I've been watching Cary

Grant and Humphrey Bogart in The Big Sleep, studying how to light a cigarette and how to stand," she says. "For the purposes of the play, the character bases his outer demeanour on the movies. It's very much about exteriors and struggling to contain the conflict of suppressing the woman within; there's a lot of pain inside, which is symbolised by the stomach ulcer, and which keeps leaking through, like the sense that he is really a woman, and how exhausting living that lie is."

At a rehearsal last week, the director Lisa Forrell explained that, for her, "the Tipton figure becomes a man for the love c: her gender change motivated by some transsexual problem. In becoming a man she adopts the stereotypical male characteristics of Hollywood, and her belief in real love is a Hollywood belief. When her wife leaves her, it's because she is fulfilling all these male stereotypes to the exclusion of anything else. I truly believe that for many years Billy Tipton really believed this, living her own lie, like women who have false pregnancies. She becomes a man who wants to fulfil the perfect American dream."

Meanwhile, the fragments of the real Billy Tipton story continue to resound within the history of jazz. Born in Oklahoma, she was brought up in Kansas City at exactly the same time as Charlie Parker. Perhaps Wilhemina participated in the same after-hours cutting sessions that helped hone Parker's genius. Or did she feel disharred because of the twin burdens feel disbarred because of the twin burdens of her race and her sex? When the secret she had kept for all those years finally exploded in the form of a stomach ulcer, underwhelming. "Now I know why I couldn't get him to a doctor," her eldest adopted son said on her death. "He had so much to protect and I think he was just tired of keeping the secret." The cheesy JFK grin of the photo remains to mock us all.

The Slow Drag' is at the Freedom Theatre, Wardour Street, London WT (0171-734 0122) to 15 March

Whatever happened to the laughter?

suppose that Push Comes to Shove must be Twyla Tharp's most popular work, although not her most subtle or inventive. Yoking together two contrasted musical animals (a rag by Joseph Lamb and the Bear Symphony of Haydn), it pokes fun at ballet while exuberantly exploiting its bravura possibilities. The success it enjoyed on its creation in 1976 was caused by the performance Tharp got from Mikhail Barishnikov in the central role; a superb classical dancer plunging unexpectedly, wholeheartedly and with entire success into the world of Americana. Unfortunately, Tetsuo Kumakawa, who takes that role in the Royal Ballet's new production of the work, is no Barishnikov, as classicist or clown.

Yes, he can do all the virtuoso steps: his pirouettes, in fact, are even more spectacular than the Russian star's were, although without his style or timing. But Barishnikov

Dance Push Comes to Shove Royal Ballet, Covent Garden

made the easy-looking bits in between just as important, whereas Kumakawa cannot do that even if he tries. He gets a bit lost under the bowler hat that provides a running gag, although he handles neatly its repeated snatchings and catchings. Kumakawa has other disadvantages, too. For one thing, he seems to have no feeling for jazz, so his attempts at jazzy movement are pathetically per-functory; for another, if he has a sense of humour, he manages

to stop it showing. Actually, he is not alone in

the laughter that used to accompany this ballet? There were only occasional sniggers at Covent Garden on Thursday. Darcey Bussell and Sarah Wildor look miscast in the other two big roles: nice dancers, attractive young women, but without the irony that the more mature and sophisticated originators of the roles brought to the American Ballet Theatre production. All the ABT dancers used facial expression far more, even the supporting ensemble. Perhaps nobody thought to tell the Royal's corps de ballet that their sequences are meant to

The dancer who comes nearest to the real spirit of the ballet is Deborah Bull, briefly featured in the second movement. But as a whole the work needs more wit, sharper timing, and bigger, more sardonic, personalities. Sorry if that sounds like lėse-majestė. Luckily, the principals all have vocif-

be a parody.

erous fans to cheer them on who, unless they watch the Barishnikov by Tharp video, will not know how much more of a treat they could be having.

The premiere came last on a somewhat bedraggled triple bill; one of those curious Covent Garden evenings when the intervals are longer than the ballets. This was to allow time for assembling and dis-mantling the hugely cluttered building site that accommodates Kenneth MacMillan's The Judas Tree, a tale of friendly neighbourhood whoring, rape, murder and blas-phemy. It is nasty and brutish, but not very short.

Before this came a revival of David Bintley's Conson Lessons, none too well danced except by Belinda Hatley and Jane Burn as the secondary soloists. For a ballet intended as an exercise in style and exactness, this is hardly good enough.

John Percival



Miscast: Darcey Bussell in **Push Comes to Shove** Photograph: Laurie Lewis

ollowing the declaration of Liverpool as an independent republic, messages of support flood in from ETA, the Tamil Tigers, and Cilla Black. This joke in Andrew Cullen's Scouse, encapsulates the play's appeal and its interest exactly: delight in the wit, but a growing unease at its juxtapositions.

Bathos is Cullen's favourite device to exploit the essential strain of Liverpudlian selfmockery. In the hilarious opening scene, the lead character, Tom, working as a tour guide ("it's better than walking the streets"), sees his party melt away from his account of the city's social history as they realise that this is neither the football nor The Beatles tour. As a vignette of Liverpool's present predicament of deprivation, a heroic past cosmeticised into a "heritage", and facile romanticism, as well as an introduction to Paul Broughton's magnificent Tom in all his bluster and dignity, this scene could scarcely be bettered.

The succeeding short scenes present a gallery of local

Theatre Scouse Liverpool Everyman

"types". The zaniest is Andrew Schofield as a flasher who gets his thrills listening to Tesco cashiers call "pricecheck"; and the most familiar is Gaynor Spearitt's Tina, the feisty tottie. The style is an interesting mix of community theatre steeped in social history, which flourished in the repertory theatre of 30 years ago, and contemporary

TV and stand-up. But as Scouse progresses, Cullen works steadily against the comic grain. While we are still willing the Liverpool Republic to further Ruritanian excesses, darker events take hold. Demonstrations turn to disturbance, riot police to paras and death squads; there are punishment beatings and shootings; bombings and then reprisals from the Manchester United Volunteer Force. By

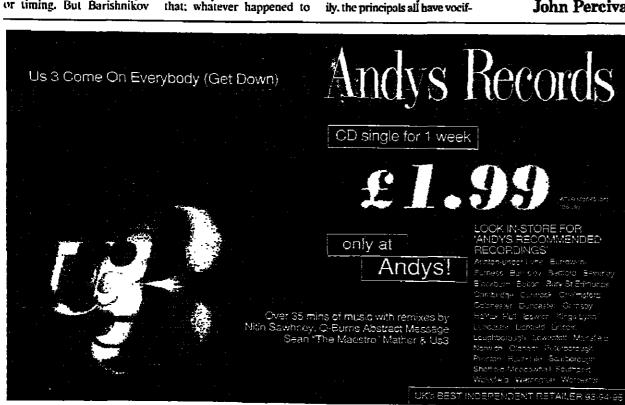
now the bathos is not so funny. Tom and his family are increasingly involved in the disturbances, and such has been our sympathy for them, especially for the excellent Kate Fitzgerald as Tom's resolute wife, Kath, it looks as though Cullen is in danger of slithering down a treacherous

slope of apologia. But as the ending makes powerfully clear, it is we who are in danger of losing our moral bearings as we struggle to square our empathy with Tom's family and their descent into terrorism. Such nice people... it couldn't happen

here... tell us it isn't true. Cullen's play is an exaltation and a satire of contemporary Liverpool, angry on the city's behalf and angrier still at the consequences of introversion. It also re-ignites community theatre in Liverpool, a feelgood play that leaves you feeling, well, not so good. Which is the best reason Scouse must enjoy the success its resounding first night promises.

To 8 March. (0151 709 4776)

Jeffrey Wainwright



or your committed opera director, Carmen has often seemed like red rag to a bull. What else is there to be said about it, darling? But Patrice Caurier and Moshe Leiser mercifully avoid the Carmen statement in their new Welsh National Opera production, which opened in Cardiff on Saturday. Though not without idiosyncrasy and a certain conscious theatrically, this is a memorable, text-based staging that gives us the work, not a clutter of post-modern atti-

tudes to it. All the same, one is conscious that particular decisions have been taken: the decision, for instance, to move the action out of its public arena - to privatise it, one might say. So Morales and friends discourse about nonexistent passers-by; Carmen sings her gyosy song to an audi-ence of two, without dancers; and in the last scene the chorus report (with brilliant vitality) on an invisible procession.

It's a Carmen of strong, sta-

Opera Carmen **WNO** Cardiff New Theatre

tic set-pieces, rather than the wide-angle and the zoom lens, and it's largely decontextu-alised: Christian Fenouillat's Seville is a few colour-washed front- and backcloths, some chairs and tables, and several bowls of oranges. Carmen herself, while she goes on about freedom and the call of the wild, is actually confined by civilised items like a chair or a fable. José and Micaela duet looking away from each other and kiss embarrassedly, barely brushing cheeks. Carmen and Escamillo croon sentimentally in a pool of soft light in a sea of gloom on

an otherwise empty stage.

The real strength of Caurier-Leiser is in their meticulous direction of the singers, and it's a strength rewarded here by a very good cast, singing in at least passable French. Carmen herself, sung with fine poise and lovely dark tone by Sara Fulgoni, is kept life-size - one gypsy among several - which in no way belittles Jose's obsession, but makes it more personal. Alwyn Mellor's Micaela is an object-lesson in the treatment of pale convention: deli-

ciously well sung, sensitive, precise and just sufficiently aware of the role's artificiality. Her aria delivered against the proscenium arch is a perfect idea, discreet and subtle. Perhaps John Dazsak's wan, lumpish José is not merely a director's image, but the role comes to life in his singing, which is beautifully focused. stylish and controlled. If there's

a weakness, it's Bruno Caproni's saturnine Escamillo

- a curiously laborious, intro-

spective torero. But Heather

Lorimer and Annie Vavrille are striking as Frasquita and Mercedes, and Simon Thorpe and Peter Hoare add real flair

to the quintet. The American conductor Robert Spano directs with crisp authority if not yet thorough command of pit-to-stage ensemble. The slowish tempi be sometimes prefers need sharper ensemble, and the quicker ones want simply to be tidier. But there is no mistaking his musical grasp, which he shares with

cal grasp, which he shares with the whole production. At the New Theatre, Cardiff, 19. 24 Feb. 1, 7 Mar (01222 878889); Bristol Hippodrome, 11, 14 Mar (0121-622 7486); Birmingham Hippodrome, 18, 21 Mar (0121-622 7486); The Mayflower, Southampson, 25, 27 Mar (01703 711811); Apollo Theatre, Oxford, 1, 4Apr (01865 244544); Empire Theatre, Liverpool, 8, 11 Apr (0151-709 1555), Grand Theatre, (0151-709 1555), Grand Theatre. Swansea 15, 18 Apr (01792

Stephen Walsh

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- China Marie

Roseanne Barr the lottery loser of all time

As poor white trash she was America's sweetheart, as rich white trash she ain't. By Daniel Jeffreys

lost her way, and how it seems in this woeful ninth year of Roseanne, a show that was once the best on American television.

The producer and star of Roseanne has already declared that this will be her last series. So far, the offerings in year nine are so bad that ABC Television may pull Roseanne in midseason, an almost unthinkable coup de grâce for a show that once occupied the top three of American television through four straight years.

The writers of Roseanne, by bowing to the whims of its titular star, have all but ruined the show, allowing Roseanne to win more than \$100m dollars in the lottery. Imagine, the bluecollar Connors with more money than Rockefeller. This absurd dramatic device turned Roseanne inside out and removed its heart as well.

Instead of being a clever comedy about trying to be married, with children, on a limited budget, Roscanne has served up duff episodes where the show's star has dressed as Xena the warrior princess, and a centrefold. Roseanne's woes are seen in the American press as a betrayal of those who stayed loyal to the show, no matter what its outrageous star did in her excessive overreactions to stardom.

It seems Roseanne Barr, now worth almost a billion dollars, has tired of realism and has turned self-indulgent instead. She is spending this season playing at dressing-up, glamorising her character, upping Roseanne Connor's income and profile,

approximation of the real Roseanne. With character Roseanne looking set to divorce Dan Connor, we can all look forward to an episode where Mrs Connor marries her new chauffeur in a champagne ceremony at the New York Plaza, only to reveal later that her second hus-

band is a cross-dressing lesbian. What's wrong with that is not the sexual politics, but the spectacle of a Hollywood star turned monomaniac, abusing a much-loved national treasure. her show, just because she can. It's Roseanne as the kid who builds big sandcastles so that she can knock them down.

Admittedly, life can get pretty strange when your job occasionally involves a \$70,000 shopping spree with Mike Tyson, especially if 18 years ago you were a trailer park mom with a bell-hop for a husband. It gets even more weird if, as Roseanne Barr believes, your mind contains at least 22 personalities, the consequence of sexual abuse by a father who behaved like a demon and forced you to leave home prematurely for pregnant life in a

The puzzle is, why have these pyschic forces imploded now? For most of her nine seasons as queen of US television, Roseanne has somehow managed to surmount her chaotic personal life. Roseanne the sitcom remained funny and inventive while the real-life Roseanne kept careening all over the place through her seemingly whacked out claims of child abuse, a lost-and-found daughter and the allegedly homicidal tendencies of Tom Arnold. Against all these odds, she

retained a finely tuned comic

It's too bad. Roseanne rocked the TV landscape in a way that's still sending out remember how raw, how rude how real - Roseanne seemed in the glitzy 1980s, "says Pre-ston Beckman, a senior executive at NBC television. "Since then, for better or worse, tele-

Roseanne's view of the world." "All the other serious sitcom actresses thank Roseanne for opening the door for them," says Dorothy Swanson, a New York theatrical agent. "Roseanne has taken a lot of hits, but she changed things for women in television.

vision has come around to

Roseanne knows that she has been a revolutionary, thrusting her attitude right in tinseltown's frequently smug face.
"Hollywood is the pipe from

hell," she said in November 1995. "The noxious gases come up and affect everyone. They're always trying to put me back in my place. The reason everyone is so scared of me is because I'm so normal. They're appalled at women who look like me, act like me, come from the class I come did, the fact that I'm Jewish. The people out here, they live to pose. I have the screaming kids. I'm always yelling at them. I'm a real mom.

Since Roseanne made those remarks her looks have changed, plastic surgery shaping her face and stomach into something closer to the Hollywood norm. Doing all that, it is hard to stay focused on a show that worked because it voiced the fears and frustrations of working-class Everywomen and did so smartly, in the subversive context of situation

I'm not Hollywood."

upper middle-class television family. The show had parents who screamed and struggled with weight problems.

this role than Roseanne Barr. She was born one of four kids into a poor Jewish family living among the Mormons in Salt Lake City. In 1968 her life was struck by a car and nearly died from internal bleeding. Thereafter Rosey, as her parents called her, seemed to spin out of control, experimenting with a hippie lifestyle and bearing an illegitimate daughter, called Brandi, whom she gave up for adoption. Roseanne also spent several months in a psychiatric hospital. Then came Bill Pentland, a hotel clerk. It was the early 1970s, and the couple

lived in a Denver trailer park. Her sister Geraldine was the force that drove Rosey up on stage. The two women became habituées of the feminist Woman to Woman bookshop and local comedy clubs where Roseanne's profane "domestic goddess" persona was shaped. They formed a 10-year plan that would carry Rosey's battered self to the Johnny Carson show, an HBO Special and

It worked, although not for Geraldine Barr. In 1992 she filed an unsuccessful \$70m breach of contract lawsuit against her big sister. The two have not spoken for years, and now Geraldine follows Rosey's

turbulent life through the media.
"I'm watching this woman I
knew and love," she says. "And
all of a sudden she gets her breasts cut off. Then she gets her nose cut off. This is really scary for me to see."



blue three years ago, which portraved Mr Barr as a man obsessed with menacing his daughter while holding handfuls of his own excrement.

Whilst Geraldine was leaving Roseanne's life, Tom Arnold, pushing her closer to centre sensibility that kept her show comedy. Roseanne was a hit Although not more fright her second husband, was filling stage. In short, she is forcing the from self-destruction. No more, because it tapped into the audi-ening than Roseanne's sudden the void. The two met when stage. In short, she is forcing the from self-destruction. No more. because it tapped into the audiTV character of Roseanne's evil genie is out of metamorphose into a close the bottle.

This town can't hand Tom two embryos), a minor miracle be like. Watching it may because it tapped into the audiaccusations of parental sex both had problems with submetamorphose into a close the bottle.

The two metamorphose into a close the bottle.

This town can't hand Tom two embryos), a minor miracle be like. Watching it may because it tapped into the audiaccusations of parental sex both had problems with submetamorphose into a close the bottle.

The two metamorphose into a clos

vear. "I have 17 pictures of my ended when Roseanne ran off with her driver/bodyguard body all bruised. while claiming that she thought It seemed that with her third

Arnold was about to kill her. Hollywood's failure to ostracise Arnold - in fact the reverse happened - has Roseanne especially steamed up. Even the parties are about work. Nobody has any fun

husband, the ex-driver/body-

guard Ben Thomas, Roseanne

had found emotional peace.

They had a long-fought-for child

late last year (after miscarrying

between these two Roseannes? A decision to deconstruct one in history, to use the Connors' lottery win as a means to mock the show's own foundation and aspirations, to make it a parody of everything that Roseanne fears but also covets.

baby is fine, but there are

rumours, strong ones, that she and Thomas are finished.

a condition called dissociative

identity disorder which she

describes as having a person-ality that's been "hit with a

hammer and smashed, so all

the emotions have been sepa-

rated". The star, in therapy

now for five years, says her per-

sonalities are so distinct that

they have different signatures.

So here we have the most

probable explanation of what

has happened to Roseanne. The

show was one of television's

icons. There's a Roseanne who

only wanted to be just that, the

symbol of prime time TV.

There's another Roseanne who

"Hollywood is the Night of

hates all of that and says so.

the Living Death," she remarked last month. "Everythe Living Death,"

one's afraid here. They're afraid

they can't keep what they've got. Everything's built on stilts,

including the stilted egos.

They're just a bunch of freaks.

The result of the conflict

Roseanne says that she has

Roseanne Barr once said that the show has been her most effective form of therapy. On the evidence of this last and final season, it has entered the Gestalt phase. One can only imagine, as Roseanne's real life apparently lurches to another crisis, what the final episode will two embryos), a minor miracle be like. Watching it may rank up considering that the star's tubes there with stopping to gawk at

I didn't kill her. Let me out, or I'll die in prison

Did 'Aunt Flo' walk to her own death? Her 67-year-old niece, convicted of murder, is due for a retrial. By Grania Langdon-Down

Sheila Bowler was led from the dock to begin a life sentence for murder, and an education in the drugs and violence of prison life that her comfortable, middle-

believe that anyone could think her searching for answers. guilty of killing her late husband's elderly aunt. And she is convinced she will not survive until 2005, her earliest potential release date.

'I have to get out," she says. "I will die if I have to stay in here. I could never take my own life but I will shrivel up and die, or my mind will become distorted. I will not survive another eight and a half years

The daughter of a solicitor, brought up as a strict Methodist, Sheila Bowler was a recently widowed, well-respected music teacher in Rye, East Sussex, when she was arrested in May 1992 and accused of pushing 89-year-old Florence Jackson into the river Brede.

In a mystery worthy of Agatha Christie, the wear and tear on a pair of slippers, an unprepared bed and a missing walking-stick and torch became sinister clues in the absence of any evidence as to how "Aunt Flo" came to be in the river.

It was about 8pm on 13 May 1992 when Mrs Bowler collected Aunt Flo from Greyfriars Residential Home in Winchelsea to take her home for the Bowler said she felt her steering fail. She stopped the car and found she had a partially flat tyre. As she had about 30 minutes later with the people from the house. Aunt Flo was immediate thought was that she could not have walked far. Thirteen

hree and a half years ago ted Aunt Flo's body lying in the water, 650 yards away from the car. The police appear to have fas-tened on to Mrs Bowler as a suspect fairly early on. Her abrasive manner and refusal to give way to emotion class world had not prepared her for. — which friends say hide a heart of Mrs Bowler, 67, still cannot gold - clearly antagonised those - which friends say hide a heart of

> A look at Aunt Flo's will provided a motive - to stop the £252 weekly cost of keeping her in a residential home haemorrhaging away the value of Aunt Flo's flat, which Mrs Bowler was due to inherit. But proving their case - that Mrs Bowler had driven her aunt to a pumping station beside the river Brede, where she pushed her into the water before driving back to the road and deflating her

tyre - was more problematic. There was no forensic evidence to link Mrs Bowler with the river bank or with the injuries her aunt had sustained. There were no tyre marks or footprints, and no blood or mud was found on Mrs Bowler's clothes. However, officers returning to Mrs Bowler's home found that there was no bed made up for Aunt Flo either because she knew her aunt would not be coming back or because, as Mrs Bowler says testily. she did not know whether her aunt would manage to get up the stairs or

would need a bed downstairs. The walking-stick and torch that Mrs Bowler said were missing from the car were never found - because weekend. Driving down a hill, Mrs they were washed away by the river,

or because they never existed? The police did consider the possibility that Aunt Flo's death was an no spare wheel, she decided to call accident - they sent someone for a recovery service from a nearby shuffling down the road in similar house. When she returned to the car slippers to see whether anything could be proved from the wear and tear on the real slipper found on the nowhere to be seen. Mrs Bowler's riverbank - but they discovered nothing conclusive.

hours later a police helicopter spot- July 1993, her defence team did not understandable conclusion that Mrs



seek to argue that Aunt Flo's death was accidental. Instead, they set about demolishing the prosecution case with great effect, arguing mid-way through the trial that there was no case to answer. In the absence of the jury, the trial judge, Mr Justice Garland, agreed that every plank of direct evidence against Mrs Bowler had collapsed. But, in a crucial decision, he ruled that the jury was still

entitled to ask: "If not the defendant, then who?" Since there was no evidence of anyone else's involvement, and since it was widely accepted that Aunt Flo could not have made the fatal jour-However, at Mrs Bowler's trial in ney by herself, the jury came to the £15,000 in investments.

Bowler must have been guilty. After the trial, her friends and

family, including her son Simon, 30, and daughter Jane, 27, were des-perate. They dismissed the so-called motive for murder as senseless. At the trial, Aunt Flo's flut in Rye had been said to be worth £30,000. But it was dark and dingy, and sold recently at auction for only £18,000, Mrs Bowler, on the other hand,

was comfortably off. The mortgage on her £150,000 family home had been paid off 12 years earlier. Shehad an income of about £17,000 a year, including a teaching salary and pension, and she had about



husband and daughter Jane), stood to gain nothing from the death of her husband's aunt Florence Jackson (above, in 1983)

her case, which is now being considered by the Home Office minister Timothy Kirkhope, will be referred back to the Court of Appeal, even if it means facing a retrial. Her case could be one of the last to be decided before responsibility for investigating alleged mis-carriages is handed over to the new Criminal Cases Review Commission on 31 March.

For the former journalist Tim Devlin, who is leading the campaign for Mrs Bowler's case to be reconsidered, the clinching reason for his belief in her innocence was the timing of Aunt Flo's death, "Sheila cared passionately about her daugh-

"It is inconceivable that she would have committed such a cruel and callous murder on the eve of Jane's final music degree examination."

But gut feelings are not enough to persuade the Court of Appeal to overrule a verdict: there must be fresh evidence, or the trial judge must have erred in law when summing up the case.

The Channel 4 series Trial and Error became interested in Mrs Bowler's case and ran the first of two programmes on it in September 1994. It came up with what seemed the obvious answer - that Aunt Flo, like many occupants of old people's homes, was much more mobile than The one glimmer of hope is that ter Jane's musical career," he says. had been imagined. She was also on

diuretics and was terrified of being

left alone - cause enough to make

her struggle out of the car and shuf-

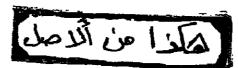
fle along the road to her death. But, in May 1995, the Court of Appeal decided that the expert geriatrics evidence put before them was theoretical and they preferred the evidence of the people looking after her - and of Mrs Bowler herself - that Augt Flo could not have walked any distance on her own.

However, her barrister David Martin-Sperry said there was no evidence that her carers were medically qualified, while Mrs Bowler's insistence that her aunt could not have walked far should have been considered from a psychological viewpoint and not taken as her instructions on the issue: "When she said, on finding out her aunt was dead, she couldn't have walked', it was wishful thinking. Mrs Bowler did not want her to have walked, which would have meant living with the responsibility of not having looked after her properly. Furthermore, by saying that, she was cutting off her sole line of escape. That is not the

behaviour of a guilty defendant."

Meanwhile, Mrs Bowler's legal team has been working on new lines of medical evidence to support the theory that Aunt Flo's death was an accident, as well as gathering more expert geriatrics evidence backed by case histories highlighting the often a uprising mobility of elderly people. For Mrs Bowler, focusing on the

problems of her fellow inmates in Holloway is her way of keeping a grip on her own fears. Her health has suffered. She had a slight stroke last year while being held in Bullwood :- Iall in Essex. "If I get out, there may be people who will still believe I was responsible for her death and will shun me, but I will just ignore them," she says. "Jane said I should not go back to Rye, with all the gossip, but



Expand Nato and pull Russia in from the cold

Moscow. Last time Maria Jana Korbel was here she was an eight-yearold girl, a refugee from Nazioccupied Prague. Now she is called Madeleine Albright, and she is the first woman US Secretary of State. After making a rapid recovery from the shock of discovering two weeks ago that her family was Jewish rather than Roman Catholic, she is on an inaugural whirlwind tour of her bailiwick – the world.

The most important issue she faces is tension between Nato and Russia. This is a greater immediate threat to global security even than the longterm issues of water shortage, population growth and global warm. 2. Whatever its troubles, Russia is still a nuclear-armed power which is heir to 85 per cent of the military strength of the Soviet Union and still dominates the Eurasian landmass. Nato is planning to enlarge to the east. This upsets the Russians.

The United States, with Britain in tow, wants Nato to embrace the new democracies of central Europe. Mrs Albright is the personification of the forces operating on American politics. One of the candidate members is her a first step. Nato itself, meanwhile, homeland, the Czech republic. The other likely candidates, Hungary and And there is some evidence that,

Liberty and

illusion in the

war on drugs

Sir: Two correspondents (letters, 15 February) present respectable and valid arguments for an alternative

be considered is individual freedom.

As John Stuart Mill put it in his

approach to the "war on drugs". Surely the most important point to

seminal work On Liberty; first

published in 1859: "The only

purpose for which power can be

will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant...

Over himself, over his own body and

In the National Drugs Campaign Survey commissioned by the Health Education Authority

mind, the individual is sovereign.

1995-1996, 45 per cent of all those

questioned said that they had taken

at least one of the listed drugs, and

54 per cent of 20-22-year-olds said

they had taken cannabis at some

time. Just how many people need to break a law before it is repealed?

Burnham, Buckinghamshire

Sir: Your review of the report

Tackling Local Drug Markets
("Trainspotting: the reality", 13
February) highlighted the wide
availability of drugs on the streets

of London, including methadone.

Methadone has come to be

regarded as a cheap and easy option in working with drug users. In parts of London and other areas

it is now far easier to get a

methadone prescription than access to drug-free treatment.

Deaths from methadone

seeing increasing numbers of

illegal drugs scene. Methadone is a palliative

to become abstinent.
PETER MARTIN

overdose now outstrip those from heroin, and apa's agencies are

clients who have become addicted

measure which does not address the real issues behind the drug use.

While accepting that methadone

has a role to play, more emphasis

must be placed upon the ultimate

goal of treatment, which is to motivate and encourage drug users

Chief Executive, apa Community Drug & Alcohol Initiatives London ECI

Sir: We have a duty to the children

The real abilities to deal with life's

ability to live in reality, to face our

If there is a "high" to be had, it

will be one of our own making in

the feeling of self-esteem that we

contentment from learning about

induced, worthless illusion that we

will have and the happiness and

fully aware, with feelings and

emotions real - not the drug-

Self-fulfilling

admission charge if they were

deterred by having to pay an

that money is no object", 14

expect? ROGER HOUGHTON

Bath, Somerset

Sir: If you ask those who've paid an

admission charge ("Museum finds

February), what answer should you

are something we are not. STEPHEN GILHOOLEY

London SE27

of our country not to encourage

escapism (letters, 15 February).

within ourselves, from our own

to methadone purchased on the

ROBIN PRIOR

he "most powerful woman in Poland, also have powerful advocates the world" arrives in London among the immigrant communities of among the immigrant communities of tomorrow to shake John America. So Mrs Albright wants the Major's hand before heading to next Nato summit in July to issue formal invitations to these three countries to join the 16-nation North Atlantic alliance. If that happens, they are expected to become members on or before 4 April 1999, Nato's 50th anniversary.

Russia does not like it. Jacques Chirac, who talks to Mrs Albright today, urges caution. So is Nato enlargement a good idea? Before we answer that question, we have to ask a more basic one: What is Nato for? Nato is a military alliance and a highly successful one – it won the cold

war. When the Soviet Union broke up, so did the Warsaw Pact alliance, Russia's cordon sanitaire. There would have been a certain logic in Nato disappearing as well. But instead, former members of the Warsaw Pact wanted to join Nato and Nato agreed that they should.

The motives on both sides were obvious. The central Europeans saw Nato membership as another credit card that free capitalist democracies carried in their wallets. They really want to join the European Union, but that is more complicated and will take longer. Admission to Nato is seen as was an institution in search of a role.



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since the end of the cold war, it could serve a purpose. It has a formal role in Bosnia, and even though the Gulf war was outside its area, Nato membership meant America's allies talked the same language and used compatible equipment and procedures.

But, equally, the Russians have good reason to regard Nato expansion as a threat. The war of words became heated last week when Russian officials reiterated Moscow's 1993 Military Doctrine, that it might use nuclear weapons in response to a conventional attack.

So, is the rush towards Nato's

expansion premature? The first thing to be said is that there are real obstacles in the way, even if the US thinks it can use its diplomatic muscle to push them aside. Nato enlargement has to be ratified by the legislature of all 16 Nato members, including twothirds of the US Senate. Turkey has already threatened to refuse to ratify new members' accession if its ambitions to join the European Union are frustrated, as they will continue to be.

There are important questions about whether the Czech, Polish and Hungarian armed forces are ready to be integrated into Nato systems.

reconstruction to the countries frozen out by Stalin.

However, the Prime Minister should warn Mrs Albright that this laudable aim should not be pursued to the extent of freezing Russia out. If Nato does have a role in the post-cold-war world, it should be to help co-ordinate responses to all threats to the rule of international law. If that is the aim, then present plans for expansion are potentially dangerous because they are too modest, in that they do not include Russia and other nuclear powers.

The argument against more ambitious expansion is that it would weaken it by making Nato too diffuse. But Nato was always diffuse. Its guarantee spanned the Atlantic, linking North America and Europe and the promise that an attack on one would be regarded as an attack on all applied to all members, including Belgium and Iceland. It always had members who were militarily weaker than others - notably Greece and Turkey. But their membership was

But Nato enlargement is not just reasons. The principle of common about matters military. The candidate security bound the members tosecurity bound the members toabout matters military. The candidate members know that. And the US sees it that way, too. A senior US diplomat earlier this month said he saw Nato enlargement as a "second bite at the apple", in trying to complete the 1947 Marshall Plan, extending post-war security system.

Mobile menace to society

That Norman Lamont had the right lidea. He just didn't go far enough.
Instead of putting a tax on mobile phones, he should have banned the phones, he should have banned the things altogether. Some aerials for them are apparently being disguised as giant plastic trees in rural areas. And today we report that masts are being installed on school roofs at £4,000 a throw – a bizarre way to attract private sector funding into the education system. A teachers' union doesn't like them because they use invisible rays and their members have to let in jobsworths in overalls to service them. We don't like them because they make it easier for people to pollute public places with private conversations. "Hello? I'm on the train. important for political and strategic I'm going to be five minutes late ...

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •



Major mixed up about history

Sir: If the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom really thinks that resurrecting the Scottish Parliament will "destroy a thousand years of British history" ("Major launches crusade to save constitution", 15 February), should not his Scottish Secretary remind him that there has been a British Parliament only since 1707, and that 290 years is a significantly shorter period than the 410 or more years for which the separate Scottish Parliament had previously

And as far as England is concerned, our last thousand years problems and insecurity come from started with this country about to become successively part of a Scandinavian empire and of Norman and Angevin empires and more recently we shared Henry VI with France, William III with the Netherlands, and George I, II. III. and IV with Hanover. ERICTHOMPSON integrity, social skills, and living life London, NW2

existed?

Sir: The West Lothian question is certainly a problem to be addressed by pro-devolutionists (letters, 14 February). However, it only become an insuperable stumbling-block to those determined to make it so.

There are several examples abroad of democracies giving a special degree of autonomy to egions whose representatives in the national parliament are not restricted as to their voting rights: Denmark (Greenland and The Faeroes); Finland (the Aland Islands): Spain (Catalonia and the Basque region); Italy (Sardinia, Sicily, Trentino-Alto Adige); not to mention the United Kingdom (the

old Stormont parliament). If the granting of autonomy to the Scots and Welsh is indeed felt to be unjust by the English, there are ways of addressing this – principally by allowing England as one or several regions to opt for the same autonomy as is granted to Scotland STEPHEN GLINSTEAD Solihull, West Midlands

King Zog a great force for good

Sir. Andrew Gumbel ("Legacy of conflict and misrule", 14 February), in describing King Zog of Albania as "a power-hungry autocrat", does this emarkable man a grave injustice.

Under his rule, first as prime minister, then as president and later as king, Albania's agriculture flourished, the oil and mining industries were developed, ports, roads, bridges and electricity installations were constructed, a gendarmerie was trained by British officers, and compulsory education introduced for girls as well as boys -

an innovation in a Muslim country. The late Lord Amery described Zog as "the most impressive man I ever met". By failing to help Zog regain his throne after the Second World War, the Western powers permitted the Stalinist Enver Hoxha to plunge Albania back into the poverty from which Zog had done so much to rescue it. DONALD FOREMAN Secretary-General The Monarchist League London WC1

Scientists must answer for BSE

Sir: Nicholas Schoon asks "Who deserves censure for BSE?"(14 February) and answers by commenting correctly that six agriculture ministers did too little

and too late.
But the Ministry of Agriculture
(Maff) scientists who advise the politicians are also to blame. The macabre and unbiological feeding of dead sheep to our cattle began after the last war. Many of the sheep were, of course, infected with scrapie and as their brains – the infective tissue – were still *in situ* the then government vets insisted that the agrifeed industry follow strict guidelines designed to protect cattle from this almost

indestructible organism.

These guidelines included the use of fat-solvents in the recycling process: the mammalian brain is very fatty and this manoeuvre ensured that brain tissue, complete with the infective organism, did not get into the cattle feed.

However, in 1981 it was decided. in the name of deregulation, that the agrifeed industry should no longer be shackled by guidelines and so they were relaxed. The Maff scientists, who presumably knew all about the scrapic agent, failed to intervene. In 1985 the first cow went down with BSE and by the end of 1986 Maff knew that six cows on three farms had died of it. They did not then ban the feed

(why not?): on the contrary,

farmers all over the UK were

encouraged to buy these new high-

Plenty of cod in

Sir: Following your report (6 February) on the threat to cod stocks in the North Sea, I felt it

important, on behalf of the UK fish

imminent cod shortage.

Current scientific evidence does suggest that there is cause for

concern about North Sea fish

stocks - and it seems that some

tough decisions will need to be

effort in order to maintain a

future.

increased.

by these fisheries.

ANDREW THOMAS

Chief Executive Booker Fish Division

Grimsby, Humberside

machine it was sent.

thriving British fishery for the

of cod supply to the British

made about reduction of fishing

However, consumers should not

be misled into believing that this

news means the imminent collapse

Britain consumes 25 per cent of

the entire world cod catch but only

5 per cent of the total is sourced

from the endangered North Sea

fishery. The majority comes from

well-managed, sustainable fisheries

such as the Baltic and Barents Sea,

We would do much to safeguard

learning some of the lessons taught

where quotas are actually being

our own fishing industry by

■ A letter on defence policy by

mistakenly attributed to Ken

Conor O'Neill, of London SW; 1, published on 12 February, was

O'Neill his father, from whose fax

processing industry, to point out that Britain does not face an

other waters

And the Maff politicians instructed their own vets that they would face dismissal if they published their interesting scientific papers on the subject or went around talking about a scrapie-like illness now in cattle.

H C GRANT

London NW3 The author is a neuropathologist

Sir: You are quite right to point out that intensive farming methods are threatening both our environment and our health (leading article, 14

February).
The world's livestock herds are accelerating erosion and desertification as vast areas of forest are cleared and used for grazing cattle. In the United States alone, 85 per cent of topsoil loss is attributed to livestock ranching.

In addition an average 25 gallons of water are needed to produce a pound of wheat, but 2,500 gallons of water are needed to produce a pound of meat. As your newspaper recently pointed out, there is a world shortage of water.

An acre of cereal can produce five times more protein than an acre devoted to meat production; and legumes (beans, lentils, peas) can produce 10 times as much. Thus the greater the human consumption of animal products.

he fewer people can be fed. Intensive farming is bad for numans, bad for the environment and bad for animals. J LINDLEY

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk). E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

of a latchkey kid

Fond memories

Sir: I must be one of the oldest surviving "latchkey kids" ("Working lives bring back the latchkey kids", 12 February).
In 1924, for economic reasons, my mother went back to work. She

was one of only about 9 per cent of married women who did paid work outside the home at that time. At the age of 10, not only was I responsible for the latchkey, which I carried in a purse slung over my shoulder along with my dinner money. I was also in charge of my younger sister and two other younger children on our mile-long walk to school (no school buses

then). My mother left the house before we did. Sometimes my father. whose work was irregular, was able to see us off, but often I was esponsible for seei

door was securely latched. We were able to get a bus home from school and arrived home at about 4.30pm to an empty house. It was my job, as the elder, to light the gaslight (no electricity then) and the fire (laid by my father before

his departure in the morning). It was then our job to lay the table for tea. We took pride in 🖰 doing this correctly. There was no sliced bread in those days and I was not allowed to cut the loaf, so that task had to await my mother's return at about 5.15pm. We filled in the short time before her arrival by reading comics (Tiger Tim or The Children's Newspaper) or starting our homework (no television or even radio to entertain us). When my mother arrived we had a light tea, helped her with the washing-up and then finished our homework while she prepared our evening meal. We had a family supper when my father came home.

This routine continued until my father obtained permanent work abroad and we accompanied him. My mother enjoyed working so she continued to work until retirement age, but was able to afford help in the home.

All is not doom and gloom for latchkey kids. The home atmosphere is what matters. Ours was a cheerful home and we all mucked in when necessary. I do not think we suffered from our experiences. My sister and I received a better education than would have been possible had my mother not worked, and are glad that she did so. AUDREY HUNT Woodford Green, Essex

No knots for us

Sir. So children will be assessed on whether they can tie their shoe-laces when they start school (report, 12 February)? What nonsense. Four-and five-year-olds have wonderful shoes which depend on Velero and buckles these days. I have no intention of teaching my son to do laces until he is six, when he will pick it up very quickly. DINAH ROBERTSON Lymm, Cheshire

Doppelgänger?

Sir. John Walsh states (February 15) that Isabelle Huppert has never appeared on the stage of the National Theatre. Last year I played there in Mary Stuart, which starred a woman doing a quite astonishingly convincing impersonation of ser. I wonder who it can have been. CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL

Control of the Control of the party

The walls w williamy to der deb

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To be brook

Now art thieves aren't Raffles but riff-raff

Criminals who specialise in national treasures are likely to be common gangsters who have done their homework, says Jojo Moyes

n Hitchcock's 1955 classic, To Catch a Thief, Cary Grant plays the romantic role of the als whom even Grace Kelly cannot resist. Yet apart from a handful of recent cases, including one where the stolen goods were recovered from a string of exclusive addresses, the days of the

Mobile men

Fond men.

of a later

Raffles-type thief seem largely to be over.

Because according to experts, in the modern world of art crime, you are more likely to be talkworks of art crime, you are more nearly to be talk-ing of characters such as the Dublin criminal Martin "The General" Cahill, or the purported UVF member "Half Track Mullan" than of aristocratic gentlemen thieves.

There are two common myths surrounding the art thief, says Charles Hill, former head of Scotland Yard's arts and antiques squad - that he is aristocratic, and that he is stealing to order for a "Dr No" figure, complete with secret hoard of priceless objets d'art. "They're not Raffles-type climbers with a box of chocolates. They're social climbing crooks. They're commodities criminals, whether it's drugs, securities or works of art. They start by stealing cars as teenagers, and then embark on their criminal career path."

He cites the example of Cabill, who graduated from domestic burglaries and stealing hire plant equipment, working towards his aim of becoming a major drug distributor. In May 1986 he organised a burglary at the home of Lord and Lady Beit, whose private art collection is considered to be one of the greatest of the 20th century. The paintings were to raise money for the drugs ven-

Cahill, who is described by Hill as "unsophisticated but cunning and persistent", used one of the paintings as collateral in a bank in Luxembourg. In 1993 he sent another to Istanbul in the care of a one-legged Scotsman known as Half sequently arrested attempting to swap it for heroin. Cahill was later shot dead by the IRA.

to Hill, it is men like Cahill who are now the rule, rather than the exception. "Within their network the guy that steals the most valuable pictures is much more highly regarded than those who steal hub-caps. That's the pecking order of the criminal mind," Mr Hill says. "They do boast of what they've done to each other. It puts you above the guy who steals the JCB. It's straightforward oneupmanship out of Stephen Potter."

This is reiterated by Peter Scott, who was once known as "the human fly" as a result of his spectacular career as a cat burglar, during which he stole an estimated £30m worth of paintings and jewellery. Mr Scott, a former public schoolboy who has stolen from, among others, Lauren Bacall, John Aspinall and Elizabeth Taylor, considers himself far removed from the perpetra-

tors of petty or violent crime. "I always had my own particular standards. I could back stealing from the very rich ... but I couldn't be too happy on acts of violence or stealing property from people who couldn't afford it," he says. Stealing art, he feels, was different. It was a vocation that required intricate planning and knowledge. "I had a lot of passion for what I did. It was more important than anything, even more than my wives. It was the ultimate orgasm, says Mr Scott, who now works as a tennis coach.

He would watch four or five country houses, as well as a couple of town houses, at any one time. He also swotted up. "I know a bit about art. You do your research and eventually you know who has what. I would only really steal paintings who has what. I would only reany steal paintings when they were wanted by someone. Some paintings are a bit like currency. Hunting pictures and horse pictures by people like Stubbs or Ferneley are very popular." In fact, he said, they were so desirable to some members of the criminal fra-

termity that they would "take a chance" and hang their plunder on their own walls.

"I had a pal that did an armed robbery many years ago from a country house in Bristol. He put one of these paintings up on his wall. Twelve years later he had guests round to dinner that recognised it. He got seven years."

Mr Scott, who subsequently wrote a book about his experiences, was as famous during the Fifties for his social exploits as for his criminal ones. "The fact that I was a rampant cat burglar did attract some silly upper-class girls," he con-cedes. But he says he was never the Raffles character the newspapers of the time made him out to be. "I was in Groucho's last night with John McVicar and I said to him, you can start believ-

ing your own bullshit."
Mr Scott believes he may have been the last of a dying breed. "Not many have been the jast of a dying breed. "Not many people are prepared to go into a country house on their own," he says. It's all gangs now. Substances have become the easier way for young people to get rich."

The world of the gentleman thief has passed, he says, because of the increasing sophistication of security devices. "You can't really climb about on roofs and ledges today because of the

houses in The Boltons, Grosvenor Square, they're all camera'd up."

However, according to Colin Norvelle-Read of Trace magazine, a register of stolen art and antiquities, the new breed of art thief is matching those devices for ingenuity. The gentleman player is being replaced by the professional. He may not know about art, but he is well aware of the market and the "business opportunities" within it.

The level of planning always surprises us. They go in there with little slide with a walking stick with notches in the side marking When the cat burglar was a gent: the centimetres, so he could

To Catch a Thief' note exactly where the In the booming art theft industry, according infrared sensors were. We've even had people who wear socks which have stripes on for monitoring infrared sensors. "

Cary Grant with Grace Kelly in

The new breed of thief, he says, is more business oriented. "You might have people stealing to order. For instance the big business this year was garden statuary ... 17th-century urns, fountains - some of them are worth as much as £10,000. Country house museums are now so tight with CCTV security that if [thieves] wanted to make money they had to adapt, to move location. So now they come into the garden with cranes."
In one recent unpublicised case, a museum that

had installed £300,000-worth of American infrared security equipment suffered a burglary after the thief shinned up a 50ft drainpipe covered with razor-wire. He simply wore kneepads, assuming, correctly, that no one would think to safeguard that window. "It's a terrible thing to say, but if someone really wants a particular piece there's not a lot you can do," says Mr Norvelle-Read.

The audacity of art thieves is still something that raises them a couple of notches above the procurer of drugs or stealer of hub-caps. Mr Norvelle-Read tells of one incident where a thief had walked around a stately home as a tourist and selected a picture with a large gilt frame of "something like a Gainsborough woman with a horse". The thief later returned and stole it, substituting a cheap poster copy of a woman and horse within a cheap gilt frame. Nobody noticed for several weeks.

"Bond Street is full of crooks," says Peter Scott. "It's littered with them." His tone is aguely disapproving. Still, as with the best criminal logic, what goes around comes around, as he himself discovered last week. "Someone just stole the hub-caps from my Ford Ghia," he says. "I hope he's enjoying them."



Britain booms as the health service ails

oom! There it goes, up, up and away, a great gossamer diaphanous balloon full of hot air. Feeling good? Never had it so good, or at least not since 1986. Oh, happy days are here again. So how does it feel to be

plumb in the middle of the boom? Can you sniff it in the air? Does it smell of Givenchy and Jean-Paul Gaultier? Hear the music of cash registers, the zip of credit cards whisking through the slots. Does it ripple go in there with little slide like Issey Miyake pleats over rules stuck up their sleeves. the skin? Or slide down the One chap went into a throat like a filament of roasted ciabatta and rocket?

You want to fly to Egypt over Easter? Forget it. Egypt is full. Watch the star-studded openings of shimmering chic restaurants, see the queues for tables spill out on to the pavements from Clapham High Street to Camden Town. MPs grumble that you can't get a decent table near Westminster for love or lots of money. (Boom talk is London talk.)

No, no, says the Chancellor. What boom? Only sustained and sustainable steady growth. It will last for ever! This time is different. Yet, from the bounce in his Hush Puppies, there is boom in the Chancellor's every step. The only difference this time is that no one thanks him for it - it's the feel-good-no-thanks-to-you boom. When will the balloon come down? Just before the next election.

Dear children, you who are too young to remember a decade ago, a word or two of warning. We have been here before - it does not last. Our mediocre growth rate has been static at less than 2.5 per cent since 1850. Even out the little booms and busts, that's what you get. As ever, the politicians eagerly mistake a cyclical uptum for permanent bliss growth at 4 to 5 per cent from now on. But what goes up must come down.

The South-east housing market is puffing fit to burst. Knight by Polly Toynbee

rassed to be seen reading it as Frank say that demand so far exceeds supply in the home counties that properties don't even reach their notice-boards; bored passengers glare over my shoulder. We are stuck for 35 minutes in the tunnel, then they are sold within hours. No slowly, slowly we inch past more negative equity by the end filthy, peeling stations, tempers fraying, pulses racing. Cool, huh? I can see Oval staof this year: we have lift-off, tion might make a hip backdrop houses, waterside, top of the for a sultry anorexic modelling a Vivienne Westwood, or maybe the Spice Girls could strut their scrawny little bellythree-bedroom country house buttons on the grungy Kennington platform. Cool. at £350,000 last week drew so many enquiries that the vend-

the need for public services on which we all depend: safe streets, hospitals that work. good schools that don't turn out hordes of unemployable yobs. public transport that runs reliably, public places that raise the spirits. This is not socialism. egalitarianism or the politics of envy, but desire for a decent quality of life that no amount of private, untaxed money can purchase. But "we" cannot

afford it - munch, munch. So what is affordability? Take the NHS, for it gets the most vate squandering, more public In the Wirral, concern about

the NHS is the first reason on

the lips of those doing nicely

who nevertheless plan to switch

to Labour. Little do they know.

NHS needs nearly 3 per cent

real growth to keep up with

more old people, new treat-

ments and drugs: it has had 75

per cent more in real terms

since 1979. Now Gordon Brown

A reminder of the figures: the

has signed his name in blood to plans for such minuscule growth that it faces calamity never before witnessed: by 1999 the NHS will be £5bn short. If it is allowed to fall so far behind, it will never eatch up because by then to get back to where the NHS is now would take a hike of 3p on income tax, which no chancellor will ever sanction. The "we" who couldn't afford it will find ourselves paying a lot more for private health insurance to cover the shortfall.

Raising the alarm in a recent What is the story? The same the NHS, for it gets the most old story as last time. More pri- unequivocal universal support. brilliant Analysis programme on Radio 4, Andrew Dilnot of the Institute of Fiscal Studies spend on the NHS is a matter of choice, not an economic law. Affordability is in the eye of the voter. But who will alert the voter that both parties are knowingly signed up to an NHS-killing budget?

Remember Gordon Brown's words: "I've an iron commitment to stability in public finances ... our programme requires no new spending ... and I can confirm also that we will be making no new commitments in our manifesto which require additional spending." Let us pray that he is lying through his teeth. In the meantime, boomers, enjoy!

A word of warning, children. We have been here before. It does not last

sealed bids in years," say the agents. Savills tell their buyers these prices will rise by 50 per cent by the millennium.

(except for those wretches

already repossessed). Manor-

range, there aren't enough

country houses to go round. A

ors demanded best-and-final

offers in sealed bids and got an

extra £15,000. "We haven't had

lan Christie, of the Henley Centre for Forecasting, says none of the overall figures tell the story. "Averages are meaningless. This is the winnertakes-all economy. Consumer confidence? Everyone knows it's a risk economy now, it's just a matter of 'how lucky do you feel?" Even the winners fear becoming the next downturn's

"Cool Britannia" said Time magazine's cover, extolling the triumph of booming Brit culture - the Sixties all over again: for Beatles, Bridget Riley and Carnaby Street read Oasis, Damien Hirst and Galliano. This issue of Vanity Fair's front cover has joined the stampede. Booming, they say. It's money from the Lottery flowing into the arts, it's the Eurostar train, the relaxation of archaic licensing laws, London, nerve centre of pop, clothes, movie-making and gastronomy. Even Tony Blair is cool. (What?)

I sit on the Northern Line reading all this, frankly embarsqualor. Booming in Beauchamp Place, bust in the Health Service. "Credit is going bananas!" says one economist. Banana republic. The rich get richer, the poor fall even further behind. Never has the income gap been so wide this century. This is like the last fin de siècle, decadent Edwardian country house parties in the midst of agricultural slump. Meanwhile in every boom the 25 per cent of people on small, fixed pensions, on social security, sickness and unemployment benefit fall further behind the rest: up goes the balloon, down stay the

downsized and downtrodden. The money that is supposed to flow into the Treasury on each upturn never flows back into public services. Cool or what? The universal political doctrine is that we can afford no more for anything. Not for transport, health or all the schemes that prevent crime. The "we" who cannot afford these things is the very same "we" lunching in Quaglino's and Mezzo.

Do I seek socialism, I ask myself suddenly, bemused. No. this is only a demand for the free market to be tempered by

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Research - finding the cure A September Character France, HRH The Daches of News REMEMBER-ARTHRITIS RESPECTS NOBODY

These guilty names shall not escape

T have in my hand a list of the names of the guilty men. I am L prepared to publish that list. Yes, I have in my hand a list of the names of the men who have done the deed. The deed which has horrified the whole of Britain. What decd?

I will tell you what deed. The deed which, day in, day out, has revolted the people of this good

I am talking about the brutal way in which Britain has been sold off cheap, curved up for a quick profit, cheapened in the international market, and brought low in the eyes of our neighbours.

The way in which our own country has been ripped off, its gas and its water, its oil and its railways all flogged by a group of get-rich-quick flash Harries who shouldn't be allowed to run a PTA school jumble sale for fear they would sell off the school and its grounds. In other words. I am talking about the way Britain has been turned from an honourable country into a society with about as much sense of honour us a conference of sales managers.

Shall ing

You know who I am talking about. I am talking about the people who were condemned in the Scott Report as having consistently lied to Parliament, all of whom refused to resign or even admit any guilt.

I am talking about the people who sold off our railways cheap for a quick buck and have left them to rot. I am talking about the people who have let our roads choke with traffic and our air fill with pollution. I am talking in very short sentences so that you understand

what I am saying. So that I don't have to do a lot of nudging and winking. Unlike Sir Richard Scott, who

made the mistake of using lots of long sentences and gentlemanly circumlocutions in his report, so that the people he accused could say, "Well, he never actually said that I lied."

So that now Sir Richard Scott goes to bed weeping every night, saying, "Oh God, I thought I had written a damning report and nobody sees it that way! If only i had spelt out what I thought instead of doing the usual English thing



Miles Kington

of hinting delicately at the facts."
This is not a mistake I intend to

make today. I have the names of the guilty people, and I am not afraid to name them.

When a person lies, I say that he lies; I do not say, like Sir Richard Scott, that "he might have done better to adhere more pedantically to the facts as he knew them".

I have the names of the liars, the cheats, the fraudsters who have brought this country low down the European league and made us a laughing-stock. I have the names of the people whose lying inefficiency inflicted

BSE on this country.

The names of those who refused to testify to Brussels about BSE. I have the names of those who pretended to be tough on crime,

and let crime increase. Who pretended to put more people in prison, and let more

who said they would preserve our town centres and let them die. (For heaven's sake get to the point!

The people I am talking about are the Tory government and their unelected quangos and their obedient chairmen and their lickspittle local bureaucrats and their time-serving hangers-on, and the men who ask questions for

money, and the ...
[I am very afraid that you may los the attention of your audience if you do not name some names soon. Ed]

The men who have made Britain a byword for sleaze and cheap profit in the last decade and a half may sue me all they like. I wish they would. I dare them to. From 10 Downing Street on

They may sue me if they wish.

downwards, I challenge the mediocrities, the half-chancers, the opportunists, the small-time fraudsters to take me to court. They know they are guilty, so they will not dare. And I challenge the people who

put them there to take me to court! Yes, the people who in 1992 voted for this tawdry government, the Sun-reading, burger-eating, soap-watching mass public who put

these guilty men in power, the

voters who connived to hand the

keys of the family silver to the petty crooks - I challenge them to say they are not accomplices to this horrifying and sordid chapter! Tomorrow I name the people in the Tory government who have done their best to ruin this country!

And I name all those gullible or scheming people who voted for them in 1992! [Oh, no you don't! Ed]

Phil Hyams

figure who loved the limelight national publicity. impulsive. temperamental, but likeable and fair-minded. He often worked by "hunches" and his hunches were rarely

Assisted by his younger brothers Sid and Mick, he put buildings of eye-popping grandeur in reach of the working classes in some of London's dreariest suburbs. The Hyams' greatest undertaking was the State at Kilburn, north London. on a three-and-a-half-acre site. The largest of all English cinemas with 4,004 seats and a tower visible for miles around, it survives as a bingo club. The Hyarus also promoted the Troxy in Commercial Road. Stepney, resplendently brought back to life for bingo in 1992 after

three decades of decay.
The Hyams' father - a Russian immigrant baker in the endary: not just two films, a East End of London - had helped finance the new Popular cinema in Commercial Road, Stepney, in 1912 and his teenage son Phil worked there in the evenings to learn the business. Joined in 1919 by the quieter, more reflective Sid, Phil built up a small circuit that included the Canterbury in Westminster Bridge Road. He amateur talent contests. One claimed that the years he spent in the early 1920s reviving the fortunes of this former music

In 1927 the Hyams converted a vast transhed into their a chance, recalling another terfirst super cinema: the Broadway at Stratford, east London a fair hearing - Gracie Fields. (no longer standing). Thanks to à versatile and gifted architect. George Coles, the auditorium looked palatial, and Coles went on to design all the cinemas the Hyams initiated. Phil demonstrated his flair for showmanship when he learned that the Prince of Wales was a keen supporter of British Legion events and offered the Broadway free for a



Phil Hyams was the last of the great showmen responsible for Britain's most spectacular cinobligingly attended and no emas. He was a flamboyant new cinema ever had more

> In 1928, the Hyams sold their circuit to the newly formed Gaumont British combine, then started afresh as H&G Kinemas in partnership with Major A.J. Gale. Three live elephants appeared at the 1930 opening night of the Elephant and Castle Tracedors—avternally nontle Trocadero – externally pon-derous, it boasted a sumptuous 3,500-seat auditorium with elaborate Renaissance decoration and an atmosphere of magical expectation that never faded. The Troxy Stepney followed in 1933, of equal size, but in the art deco mode. (There was also the Troc-ette Bermondsey, an existing cinema taken over and

The Hyams' philosophy was "If you give 'em value for money, they'll come", and their cine-variety shows were legnewsreel and organ interlude, but huge variety bills featuring top artists of the day. "Mr Phil", and "Mr Sid" (as the Hyams were known to all) were unusually generous employers: at the end of a good week, staff would often find a bonus in their pay-packets.
The cinemas also featured

night at the Trocadero, Phil went to the rescue of a hapless fortunes of this former music ball were the happiest of his life. young singer who was being mercilessly barracked. He perrified novice who had received His story was, he readily confessed off-stage, "a pack of

> The Hyams linked with Gaumont in 1935 to expand further. forming Gaumont Super cinemas. Brother Mick was on board as theatre controller. At Kilburn, their long-gestating Troxy had become the Gaumont State when it opened at Christmas 1937. Here a modern skyscraper tower with full broadcasting facilities rose above an entrance hall in Italian Renaissance style with marble floors and columns, pink mirrors, and two chandeliers modelled on those in the banqueting hall at Buckingham Palace. It was a place fit for royalty and in fact Queen Mary regularly came to programmes in

The State's vast auditorium continued the classical theme but in a less elaborate, less overwhelming style than at the Trocadero. The huge stage, or-



The Gaumont State, Kilburn, the largest of all English cinemas when the Hyams opened it in 1937

chestra pit, Wurlitzer organ, twenty dressing rooms, band room and scenery workshop were all put to use for frequent live shows over the years from ballet and circuses to

pantos and pop concerts. This was the Hyams' last great venture. With war imminent, they worried about their concentration of inner London properties and sold off projects at Holloway and Kingston-on-Thames.

The Blitz did indeed have a devastating effect. Audiences Soho vice drama The Flesh Is were scared to enter the Trocadero and State at the height of the bombing and they were closed for several weeks to save money. The Hyams sold out to Gaumont in 1944, just before the post-war boom in atten-

dances made goldmines out of their huge theatres. In 1947 the Hyams launched

a distribution company called Eros Films. This reissued hundreds of old Hollywood favourites like Beau Geste and The Road to Singapore and also backed new films by British producers, ranging from the Frankie Howerd comedy The Runaway Bus (1953) and the star-laden war drama *The Sea* his brothers. In fact, Phil Hyams *Shall Not Have Them* (1954) to celebrated his 100th birthday at star-laden war drama The Sea exploitative material like the Weak (1957) plus Cliff Richard's screen début in Serious Charge (1959). Old music halls at Crovdon and Lewisham were turned

into Eros cinemas. By the late 1970s, the Hyams were left with only the Biograph in Wilton Road, Victoria, an old fleapit which they had never been able to sell and which, in the spirit of P.T. Barnum, was inaccurately promoted as Britain's oldest operating cine-

ma. This closed suddenly in 1983, to be demolished in days. But both the State Kilburn and Troxy Stepney stand, as listed buildings and monuments to the taste and daring of Phil and

a reception in Kilburn alongside

Allen Eyles

Philip Hyams, film exhibitor: born London 26 March 1894; married 1919 Yetta Kramer (two sons); died London 8 January 1997.

Tony Hawes

"Tony Hawes, meet Denis Gif-ford," said Bob Monkhouse and Denis Goodwin after a broadcast they had written for Cyril Fletcher and Betty Astell. "He likes Laurel and Hardy too." Which is about as namedropping a start for an obituary as has ever been written. We shook bands, had a beer and soon discovered we had even

more in common than comedy. He was a regular in the RAF; I was recently demobbed. He was a cartoonist with a penchant for comic strips; I was the same. He liked old movies and travelled miles to catch up on Boris Karloff reissues; so did I. In no time at all we were teaming up as comedy writers in the wake of our pals, Monkhouse and Goodwin, and our first business card read, "Gifford and Hawes for your scripts of course!"

Our career was held back by Tony's RAF contract, but in a while we were progressing fast enough for him to borrow from Bob enough money to buy him-self out. I wasn't smart enough on the borrowed fourpenny busride home, we went our separate ways. But we came together again in time, and concluded our relationship, suddenly and shockingly, the best of chums.

Hawes was born in Blackheath, south-east London, in 1929, and joined the art staff of the Bristol Evening World as an apprentice cartoonist. A little later he came back to London in a slightly superior art job at the Daily Mail, helping their car-toonist "Spot" (Arthur Potts) draw the daily strip starting that paper's revived pre-war chil-dren's character Teddy Tail. Hawes's most endearing, some would say irritating, charm was his regular recounting from memory the opening lines of a strip serial starring the mouse's insect mentor, Dr B (Beetle). After National Service,

Hawes failed to rejoin the Mail, so signed on for a term. It was 1952 when we met, 1953 when we turned into a team. The BBC started a weekly concert party called The Light Optimists, an old-fashioned title for a newfashioned series designed to star new talent and new writers. We had a go, sent in a script, and were thrilled to be sent tickets to see it performed. Of the handful of three-minuters we wrote, the best was a monologue for an old tram driver which began: "I am a driver - Albert Driver!" It was performed by a vouthful newcomer who was already specialising in quivery

old-timers, Clive Dunn.

The best thing we wrote together came to nought. Hawes the Brixton Empress, where who should be appearing but description "A Cuddly Toy".

Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, making their last lap of Britain. From the moment the band struck up with their signature tune, "The Dance of the Cuckoos", we were in a trance. "But they look just like them!", I said. After the sketch, we went

round to the stage door. We had suddenly come up with the idea that we might write a radio spe-cial for them. Yes, Mr Laurel and Mr Hardy would be pleased to see us. Well, we saw Mr Laurel and Mr Hardy. That is, we saw Mr Laurel, rather frail but very forthcoming, and we saw Mr Hardy at long range, redfaced and puffing, through his dressing-room door. Yes, said Stan, we might try.

but they would want to see the script first, and here you are. boys, have an autographed photograph apiece. Hearts beating, we started work. We presented the final half-hour to Bill Worsley, the producer of Workers Playtime. "We will see what they say," he said. They said no, but whether it was Stan and Olto take this as a warning of the shape of things to come. After some years of buying Tony threepenny-worth of chips to eat to the Moon. Science fiction was all in the air in those days.

We were taken on as a team by Hector Ross Radio Productions, under Monty Bailey-Watson, who made programmes for sponsors to broadcast over Radio Luxembourg. We were to take over the devising of stunts for a show hought from America called People Are Funny. The Sunday we went to see a recording, the show's host, Peter Martyn, died. In came an unknown Vic Perry, a cabaret pickpocket. He delivered a weeping obituary for a man he had never seen or met. in which he told us how Martyn was even now hosting a great audience participation show for St Peter at the pearly gates.

Hawes was hived off to write a new series called Shilling a Second, sponsored by the Co-Op and starring Paul Carpenter as the quizmaster, while I took over the stunt devising for People Are Funny. Our producer was a John Whitney, who later surprised everybody who knew him by achieving national fame as Director-General of the IBA.

Commercial television brought Tony Hawes to the attention of the public, if not by name. His uncredited voice announced Sunday Night at the London Palladium, and later described the prizes which were "on the conveyor belt tonight" for Bruce Forsyth's and Larry Grayson's long-running series The Generation Game. It was this show which brought us together again as writers, creating stunts and sketches for viewer volunteers to perform in comhad suggested we take a trip to petition. It was Hawes who

Among the many television series which Hawes scripted were The Dickie Valentine Show. The Liberace Show and Hippodrome. Perhaps the best remembered is the original Dev O'Connor Show, with its comic line-up of a parodic quarter featuring scowling little Johnny Vvvyan and the catchphrase 13:111

One more time!" Hawes also had a go at acting in films, thanks to his membership of Gerry's Club, run by Gerald Campion, television's Billy Bunter, and where, incidentally. Hawes met his first wife, Helen, the barmaid. He played small roles in The Soupbox Derby (1957), a feature for the Children's Film Foundation, Piccadilly Third Stop (1960) and The Frightened City (1961), in both of which he played the foppish Lord Buncholme –

onounced Bunch-humel He also scripted several small pictures, beginning with Hair of the Dog (1901), in which Reginald Beckwith starred as a commissionaire at a razorblade



es: 'A Cuddly Toy

factory who caused a strike by growing a beard. Another was Strictly for the Birds (1963), with that forgotten talent Tony Tanner as a Soho gambler.

Our paths crossed again when he guested on my Looks Familiar series, and he later became programme associate on Quick on the Draw, created to showcase popular cartoonists. We came together again with the Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Society. I had organised the Film Funsters, the first British "Tent" of the Sons of the Desert as it was known, but found the work too demanding. A new organiser got both of us involved with the first ever International Convention, which took place in Hollywood in 1980. Hawes and I both went and met Stan Laurel's daughter, Lois. A little later Hawes married her. Thus does life tie itself neatly together, provided

Denis Gifford

Anthony John Hawes, actor and scriptwriter: born London 23 March 1929: twice married (one son): died Tarzana, California 13 February 1997.

Mary Bancroft

Mary Bancroft was that rarity in real life, a glamorous upperclass spy. She reached that condition by the tried and tested method of having a love affair with a man who was himself one of the most important spies of the Second World War and went on to be the most celebrated chief of America's

Central Intelligence agency.
Allen Welsh Dulles had served as an American secret agent in Switzerland during the First World War. After the United States joined the Second World War, Colonel "Wild Bill" Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services, precursor of the CIA, gave Dulles the assignment of returning to Switzerland to create a network of intelligence inside Nazi

Dulles sent an NBC radio technician. Gerald Mayer, ahead to begin identifying possible agents, and one of the first people Mayer recruited was Many Bancrott.

Then a handsome, bored married woman aged 38, Mary Bancroft had dropped out of Smith College in Massachusetts, and rebelled against the ultra-respectable life of a debutante in Beacon Hill, the Mayfair of Boston, where she was brought up by her stepgrandfather, C.W. Barron, who was the publisher of the Wall Street Journal and the founder of the obliged by lending him some

business magazine which bears his name. Something of a Bright Young Thing, not to say a "goer", in the Jazz Age, Bancroft had been married twice. first to an American, then, to the surprise of her friends, to a Swiss accountant called Jean Rufenacht. She tired of the marriage. and first wrote a novel, then began to study the work of the great Swiss psychologist, Carl

She had many lovers, and as

Gustav Jung.

her husband's work took him away from home frequently, she was in restless and emotionally available mood - "randy and ready", says Dulles's biographer - when, early in December 1942, she was introduced to Allen Dulles over a drink at the ultra-discreet Hotel Baur am Lac in Zurich. Her upper-class credentials appealed to Dulles. himself the nephew and grandson (and later the brother) of American Secretaries of State, and a partner in the powerful New York law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell. But she was also a highly intelligent woman who had been living in Switzerland since 1934 and had acquired

excellent French and German. He quickly put the relationship on a more intimate basis by asking her to help him to find some bed-linen, scarce in wartime Bern, where he lived under diplomatic cover, and she

Within days he took her for a walk along the lake in Zurich and put his double proposition to her with bluntness close to effrontery, "We can let the work cover the romance," he said, "and the romance cover the work."

Before long both work and romance had settled into an efficient and pleasurable routine. Every morning, at precisely 9.20. Dulles would telephone Bancroft and tell her what reports he needed translated. They kept their conversation secure by using American slang, something that was more impenetrable in Switzerland in

1943 than it would be today. Once a week she would take the train from Zurich to Bern, and check in at a cheap hotel opposite the station. She would then take a taxi to Dulles's comfortable home, where they would spend the day preparing a report for Washington. That evening Dulles would report to Donovan over a more or less sccure radio-telephone, high technology for the day. Spy master

and spy mistress would then retire to bed together. After a while. Dulles gave Bancroft the assignment of editing a book written by Hans Bernd Gisevius, an upper-class Prussian military intelligence officer who was both an agent of Admiral Canaris's Abwehr se-

from her husband's country cret intelligence service, and a member of the anti-Nazi underground. He was naturally one of Dulles's most prized contacts inside the German Resistance. Before long, Mary was romantically involved with Gisevius too.

At the same time as she was becoming drawn deep into the web of intelligence-gathering and anti-Nazi plotting in Switzerland, Bancroft was getting more and more involved in her study of Jungian psychology, and eventually became a confidante of Jung himself.

Her relationship with Dulles soon began to cool; he was a physically ardent but emotionally cold lover who once demanded that they make love hastily on a sofa "to clear his head" before an important meeting. After the end of the war, Dulles was joined in Switzerland by his wife Clover. She lost no time in telling Bancroft that she was aware of her relationship with her husband and that she approved of it, and the two women became close friends for life.

Later, after Dulles had become the first head of the new Central Intelligence Agency and she had returned to New York, Bancroft also became close, though apparently not sexually involved with, Henry Luce, the publisher of Time and Life, whose wife, Clare Booth



Bancroft: 'randy and ready

Luce, was another of Allen Dulles's lovers. She became a leading champion of Jung's psychology in the United States and wrote a number of articles in learned journals about his work. The relationship with the

Dulles family became even closer when, in 1952, Bancroft's daughter, Mary Jane, married Horace Taft, son of the conservative candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, and Allen Dulles gave the bride away. In 1983 Mary Bancroft wrote

her memoirs, which she called Autobiography of a Spy. Godfrey Hodgson

Mary Buncroft, spy: born 29 October 1903; twice married (one daughter): died New York 10 of her teenage daughter Judith January 1997.

Edith Cotterill

Edith Cotterill was born in a cellar during a Zeppelin raid on Tipton gasworks in 1916. Later she spent 25 years as a district nurse in Tipton, at the heart of the Black Country which industry made "black by day, red by night" so that Queen Victoria would only go through it with the blinds of the train window drawn. Cotterill loved it and on retirement was the author of a best-selling book about her experiences as a Black Country nursing sister, Nurse on Call.

Educated at Wolverhampton Girls' High School, Edith Humphries decided to become a nurse. "I did it to get away from home, and to escape the vicar who wanted me to become a missionary." At Margate Hospital when war broke out in 1939 she met her future husband, Harry Cotterill, a patient rescued from a minesweeper. He too - and other crew brought in - came from the Black Country and Edith was called on to act as an interpreter. "They're supposed to be British but they can't speak a word of English." a fellow nurse said.

After a wartime marriage and the birth of two daughters Edith Cotterill returned to nursing as a district nurse in Tipton. where her chief petty officer husband had become ambulance station officer. The death stimulated Cotterill to take up Cotteril: a 'good noddle'

write articles and poems by Harold Parsons, editor of the Black Countryman, the magazine of the Black Country Society. In 1973 the society published her slim volume Black Country Nurse at Large. It sold 9,000 copies locally and at-tracted the attention of a literary agent, who persuaded her to write an enlarged. Anglicised version, Nurse on Call. Published in 1986, it became a best-seller. Women's Own featured it. "Soddin besom yo'm bin writin abowt me." a patient chided Cotterill. Burra I wull say this for yer, Nus. yo' gorra

good noddle on ye."

Readers loved Nurse on Call because it took them into the other world of nursing which is beyond hospitals. The nurse



writing. She was encouraged to who works on the district (the term now is in the community) meets the patient on the patient's own territory, whereas the patient in a hospital is on the nurse's own ground. It makes a difference to the relationship. And Cotterill's beat was not along country lanes but streets of tenements. She transmuted real stories of bed bugs, impacted faeces and banknotes sodden because the patient had them in bed for safe-keeping. They were told with humour tinged with sadness, and highly readable.

An animal lover - on leaving school she showed at Cruft's the first puppy to win the champi-onship - Edith Cotterill donated the bulk of her royalties to animal charities. She never wrote the sequel to Nurse on Call which her publisher wanted but up to her death was writ-ing pieces and poems for the Black Country Society - such as "A Plea from a District Nurse": Please be kind to district nurses.

Don't belabour us with curses. Even though we may look tough. We are built of tender stuff.

Laurence Dopson

Edith Humphries, district nurse and writer: born Tipton, Staffordshire 24 January 1916; married 1940 Harry Cotterill (died 1982; one daughter, and one daughter deceased); died Machynlleth. Powys I February 1997.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

WOLFERS: On 6 February to Estelle and Peter, a son, Jeremy Philip Jacques, a brother for Felix.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS. MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293, 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293, 2010 and are charged at 650 o line.

Birthdays

Sir Derek Andrews, former senior civil servant o4; Mr Yasser Arafat, chairman, Palestine National Au-thority, 68; Mr Alan Bates, actor, 63; Mr Jim Brown, actor, 62; Mr Bryan Cassidy, MEP 63: Mr Tom Clausen. former chairman and chief executive, Bank America Corp. 74: Dr Gordon Cook, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Sci-ences. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medictine, b5; Miss Angela Eagle MP. 36; The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, Lord-Lieutenant of Fife, 73; Lord Foot, solicitor and conservationist, 88: Miss Prunella Gee, actress, 47; Mr Bernie Grant MP, 53; Mr Douglas Hoyle MP, 67: Mr Barry Humphries, entertainer, 63; Sir Gordon Jones, former chairman, Yorkshire Water, 70; Mr Richard Kennedy, Head Master, Highgate School, 48; Mr Andrew

Leigh, general manager, the Old Vic. 56; Miss Julia McKenzie, actress and singer. 56; General Sir John Mogg. former Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 84; Professor Dr Claire Palley, former Principal, St Anne's College, Oxford, 66; Mr Gene Pitney, country and western singer and composer, 56; Mrs Ruth Rendell, crime novelist, 67; Miss Pa-Michael Shersby MP, 64; Lord Slynn of Hadley, a Lord of Appeal in Or-dinary, 67; Commandant Mary Tal-bol former Director, WRNS, 75; Sir

Anniversaries Births: Ronald Arbuthnon Knox, theologian, 1888. Deaths: Giordano Bruno, philosopher, burnt at the stake 1600; Molière (Jean-Baptiste

Anthony Wilson, former head of the

Government Accountancy Service, 69.

Poquelin), playwright, 1673; (Harry) Heinrich Heine, poet, 1856; Graham Vivian Sutherland, painter, 1980; Evelyn Laye (Elsie Evelyn Lay), actress and singer. 1996. On this day a majority in the House of Commons decided that Britain should join the Common Market, 1972. Today is the Feast Day of St Evermod, St Finan of Lindistarne, St Fintag of Cloncenagh, St Loman. The Seven Servite Founders and Saints Theodulus and

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS Changing of the Guard
The Household Corairy Mounted Regiment must
the Union's Life Chard at Horse Guards Heat.

The following notes of judgments were prepared by the reporters of the All England Law Reports.

Children

Re C (minors: care proceedings; ordinary residence): Fam D (Wall J) 17

Where a family, whose children were subject to an interim care order, moved from one local authority's area to another's, thereby losing ordinary residence in the first area but without yet acquiring it in the other, the local authority to whom the interim care order had been made remained the designated authority under s Hackney LBC) for the first local au-

CASE SUMMARIES

17 February 1997

38(1) of the Children Act 1989. The fact that a local authority permitted children to authority: Joan Moore (John Ford) for the mother. Lawrence Cohen, solicitor remain at home under an interim care order did not (Stuart Miller & Co) for the guardian 3d constitute the provision of accommodation within s 23(1)(a) of the Act. Therefore Solicitor s 105(6) did not apply and the court was free to look at the

applying the disregard under s 105(6). Annie Bradwell (Christopher Hinde,

ordinary residence of the chil-

dren under s 38(1) without

thority: Andrew McFarlane (Jonatha) Jessup. Surry CC1 for the second local

Hurlingham Estates Ltd v Wilde &

Ptrs: ChD (Lightman J) 10 December A competent solicitor, practis-

ing in the field of conveyancing or commercial law, should be aware of the trap laid by s

Stewart-Smith (Ba
34 of the Income and Taxes Act for the defendant.

1988, which applied where payment of a premium was required under a lease for not more than 50 years and by virtue of which the landlord was treated as becoming entitled to an amount by way of runt at the date when the lease was granted. The defendant solicitors' firm failed to advise the plaintiff that the structure of the relevant transaction would expose it to a charge to tax which could be avoided by formul alterations, and therefore was

Michael Jeffens (Ernest H. Godson & Co. Sleaford) for the plaintiff; William Stewart-Smith (Barlow Lyde & Gilbert)

Rank is caught between a Hard Rock and a soft share price

to revitalise a company, often take a long time to deliver. Indeed, shareholders of the slumbering Sears retailing group are still awaiting the benefits of Liam Strong's arrival five years are

rival five years ago. When he was recruited from British Airways the couragement. Towards the shares of what has for long been regarded as the Cin-

Andrew Teare, enticed from English China Clays, must be uncomfortably aware

A surprising slowd the User Port Cafe ch ing battle Mr Strong has

one of his first moves was to in an era when any half-decent shed the long-standing catering concept gets the cash Organisation part of the title

4 22 0

breaking stock market. They Gifford in April. The price fin- that Rank gets itself back on

ished last week at 411.5p. end of last year Rank produced a trading statement derella retailer were bumping along at a depressing 100p; seen in some quarters as little more than a profit warning. So around £300m seems the most likely outcome against £272m

garded as Rank's profits kitchen created trading indiwaged.
True, he has been chief exgestion. There were signs the

New chief executives, called in to revitalise a company, often take a long time to deligate the experienced by a record—benefits should emerge later.

But the market is anxious. But the market is anxious. As NatWest Securities says, "What is absolutely critical is

> a growth tack."
> The Teare revolution has not expected to offer much an not, of course, been confined to a name change. The Shearings coach holidays operation has been sold for £83m. And another £300m of assets

are due to go.
One could be Rank Film Distributors, with a library of hundreds of classic British of the long, so far unrewarding battle Mr. Strong and the Hard Rock Cafe chain, re-- the man with the gong. Even after the sale Rank will remain an important film company, with Pinewood Studios and the 300-plus

screen Odeon chain. Mr Teare wants to concen-



signalled that it nurses casino

Share spotlight

hopes in the United States.

STOCK MARKET WEEK

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

is a buyer as well as a seller. It In a sense Mr Teare splashed out £96m for the Tom Cobleigh pubs chain and has

adopted one of the ambitions of John Davis, who ruled Rank with an iron hand when it was largely a showbiz en-terprise. He displayed a taste for drink and wanted to bid for the old Watney's brewing and pubs group; an aspiration he had to shelve because of opposition from trusts related to

position from trusts related to the group's Methodist founder, the legendary J Arthar Rank.

One quick fix Mr Teare could offer is the sale of Rank's remaining 20 per cent interest in Rank Xerox, the

seems in no hurry. At one time the sale was planned for the early part of this year. Now it seems to have been put back to have been put back to have been put back. to late next year.

the market will have to display patience. But as any hard-bitten professional knows it is reluctant to take prisoners and Mr Tears cannot allow Rank shares to continue to un-

derperform. It could be argued that the market last week highlighted the Rank weakness by finding yet new peaks.

International investment houses appear to be rather less relaxed about share prospects than many of the home-grown

through a share buy-back or changed at 4,240 points in a special dividend. But he year's time. And Daiwa, the

Developing such a hotchpotch of interests will be a

York has helped the market face the looming election in a calm frame of mind. There is a deep suspicion that without the soaraway performance of the Dow Jones Average the Footsie display would have

been much more subdued. Indeed the gap between the two indices is yawning wider and wider, illustrating that Footsie glee is restrained

by the political uncertainty. Sterling's strength has been another inhibiting influence; so has the will-he, won't he in-

far, too quickly. There will be better opportunities to buy the market between now and the first Labour Budget." The securities house is on a 4,600 Footsie by the year-end.

Other blue chips reporting this week are Barclays and SmithKline Beecham. Lloyds TSB got the banking profits season off to a fine start and Barclays, figures tomorrow, should keep up the pace with a 17 per cent gain to £2.45bn. There could also be developments such as splitting the

banking and investment sides. SmithKline, also tomorrow. should also impress. The drugs group, with a £24.3bn capitalisation, is the latest to find that sheer size is no protection from takeover specu-lation. But tomorrow it should be able to dismiss barmy

business & city **BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER**

Pearson backs ex-Penguin boss ahead of grilling

The Pearson board yesterday stood behind Peter Mayer, the had no knowledge of the ac-counting scandal that has forced the media group to take a £100m charge against its 1996

The backing came as Pearson prepares to interview Mr Mayer about the affair today following his return to the US after a six-

week holiday in Europe. A tors did not know and did not ecutive of Penguin USA in senior Pearson figure said yesterday that Mr Mayer would not prove a reluctant interviewee: former head of Penguin Books "Peter was obviously in charge in America, saying it believed he of the company for a long time and he would insist on being interviewed about this."

Asked if the board believed Mr Mayer was aware of the complex accounting scheme. the Pearson insider said "absolutely not".

Asked if he should have known, they said: "If the audidiscover the cover-up, then you would not necessarily expect the chief executive to know.

This view has been challenged by some City analysts, who say that while they accept that the invoice procedure in publishing houses borders on chaos, certain factors should have set alarm bells ringing. "They were seeing debtor levels rise. Why didn't they question

Mr Mayer became chief ex-

1978. He resigned late last year to run Overlook Press, a New York-based publishing house he founded in the early 1970s.

Pearson maintains that the complex accounting scheme, which involved book retailers being given unauthorised discounts in return for early pay-ment, was the work of one woman who has since been

It is unclear if the woman is still helping Pearson with its in-

She's not very happy," Pearson

Pearson believes the byzantine system of accounting transactions created to deceive management and auditors was not an act of fraud but a coverup. So far Pearson has discovered no evidence of any financial gain by the woman that would have provided her with

As the investigation by new

quiries into the matter. "She auditors Price Waterhouse conwas. I'm not sure if she still is. tinues, there is concern among City analysts that Penguin's 1997 sales could be affected. They say retail customers in the US must have known about the discounts and possibly in-creased their orders accordingly. Some analysts believe that following the termination of the scheme, there is a danger that retailers will buy fewer books from Penguin as they will now be paying higher prices.
"You just don't know what the

regime," one analyst said. It is possible that retailers who did not receive the discounts may take legal action to force Penguin to make a retropublishers undertook to treat all

spective payout. Under an agreement between book publishers and the American Booksellers Association in late 1994. retailers on equal terms. However, as the agreement was not enshrined in law, it is unclear if

Chris Godsmark **Business Correspondent**

Centrica, the British Gas supan independent company today, is negotiating with the Gov-ernment to slash its tax bill in a move that could boost its prof-its by around £150m a year. The discussions are part of

Centrica

battles

to save

£150m

in taxes

Centrica's drive to lessen the huge financial burden from its "take-or-pay" contracts with the leading oil companies to buy gas at well above market prices. The new tax deal revolves

around huge sums in petroleum revenue tax levied on gas production in Centrica's vast Morecambe Bay fields, which represent the newly demerged company's main asset.

[K set

fine Analysis

PARINIE

Solo In

_publishing

Oth 21st Mars

 $\mathfrak{So}_{\mathfrak{lip}_{\mathbf{I}}}$

Under an agreement struck in 1986 with the Oil Taxation Oifice (OTO), an offshoot of the Inland Revenue, British Gas had to pay tax and royalties on gas it supplied itself from Morecambe based on a price believed to be about 27p a therm. However since 1994 the price of gas has slumped to around 13p.

A senior Centrica source confirmed that negotiations were going on with the OTO. "We are trying to bring prices down in line with those in the market." However the source added that it would be a tough ob to find a solution.

The OTO has the right to set the company's notional gas price for tax purposes because the internal contracts to buy gas from Morecambe Bay only involve Centrica itself. The Goverament aims to prevent the group from setting an unrealistically low internal price to cut its tax liability, a tactic known

as "gaming". The sticking point in the discussions is the difficulty of putting a value on Morecambe's gas, which provides around 7 per cent of the UK's entire supply. The fields are unique in providing for the massive swings in demand during the year seen in the domestic market, where Centrica has an almost total monopoly. It means Morecambe's gas price is likely to be higher than the spot price in the

energy markets. The dilemma explains why Centrica is seeking to offer a stake in Morecambe Bay to either Esso or Shell as a bargaining tool in its take-or-pay negotiations. The two producers are expected to be the next companies to agree to renegotiate

some of the contracts. Simon Flowers, head of utilities at NatWest Securities, suggested a cut in the Morecambe price of 25 per cent would net Centrica £150m a year with a corresponding loss to Treasury coffers. Over the life of the field, until around 2020, he predicted it would save the company about £1bn in current prices.

Fate of single currency hangs in the balance

Yvette Cooper

The success or failure of a single currency will depend on decisions made during the next year, according to an authoritative new report.

Professor David Currie of the London Business School argues in "The Pros and Cons of EMU' that the decisions European governments have not yel made - most crucially on the way that fiscal policy will work under monetary union and on reforming labour markets will determine whether a single

currency succeeds or fails. The report says: "Going for-ward with EMU does not condemn Europe to failure, nor guarantee its success. And the same goes for abandoning the single currency project ... everything will depend on the wisdom

ments still have yet to make." The report is the most extensive and balanced so far into the pros and cons of the single currency project, and contrasts with the polemical tone of many re-

ports on the subject.

Commissioned by the Economist Intelligence Unit, the report was sponsored by several leading international banks and companies, including ABN-Amro Hoare Govett, Kleinwort Benson, Prudential and Rothschilds.

The benefits of a single currency discussed in the report include gains to consumers from greater competition and the rationalisation of production across Europe, and low interest rates. The report says that although it is possible that the new euro could become a weak currency, "the euro countries for all its members." Professor

of the choices that govern-Weak businesses 'will be left behind'

and banks that are not prepared, will lose out to their competitors under a single currency, according to the report by Professor David Currie, writes Yvette Cooper.

Greater competition and pressure for rationalisation of businesses across Europe will mean that "the inefficient or unresponsive company will find itself under pressure". However, the report says that "the efficient customer-oriented company will have the opportunities of operating across a much larger customer base".

The report says that businesses will benefit considerably from the elimination of uncertainty about exchange rates. It claims that so long as countries in the EMU zone do not introduce further social legislation to burden companies, then "the net benefits to Europe's busi-

However, the adjustments that banks and businesses need to make are considerable, whether they will be inside or outside the

new EMU zone. From adapting cash tills to changing computer accounting systems, from changing the mination of debt to adjusting the timing of financial reports, the report says that an-

Banks are a special case, according to the report, and will need to prepare extensively for the euro regardless of whether they reside in countries that are in or out of the single currency. The report says that increased competition across national borders in the EMU zone will lead to rationalisation and restructuring of the European banking structure, "with more pan-European players together

the design of the European Central Bank." The drawback, however, is that governments will not be

able to use interest rates and exchange rates to respond to particular economic circumstances. The report says: "In many countries this freedom has been greatly abused: the cost of surrendering it is therefore smaller than might be thought. But in countries where monetary policy has been well conducted, the cost is significant."

ble inflation ... because of the

attention that has been paid to

Although the report is careful to maintain a balanced position and consider all the arguments it says: "We do expect EMU to happen. Far more tentatively we expect it to be a success, though not necessarily are likely to enjoy low and sta-unemployment will remain high and even intensify in some parts of the EMU zone.

He argues that coping with unemployment, and increasing the chances of EMU's success will require "appropriate reform of fiscal, welfare and labour market arrangements within the EU to remove undue rigidities in European economies. This would in part require the reform of the stability and growth pact."

The report says that individual nations should be able to borrow more over the economic cycle, to ease national economies through downturns, while maintaining constraints on ticipating changes will pay off. excessive borrowing in the long run. At the moment the stability pact sets out fines for deficits in excess of 3 per cent of GDP, although it remains to be determined how strictly this would be interpreted. The report also suggests redirecting - and pos-sibly expanding - EU spending towards regional unemploy ment rather than the Common Agricultural Policy, "It may well mean an evolution over time towards a form of fiscal federalism," it adds.



Return match: Sandy Anderson has emerged as a potential backer of a new shareholder bid

Nigel Cope

Sandy Anderson has emerged as the potential backer of a group of Nottingham Forest shareholders who are planning a last-minute bid for the club.

The Porterbrook Leasing millionaire, who has already had one bid for the club turned down, is thought to be willing to invest £3m-£4m in an offer being put together by former Forest chairman Fred Reacher and two other directors, Keith Gibson and Jamie Mellors.

The move comes just days ahead of a crunch meeting next Monday when Forest shareholders will vote on the bids made by the Albert Scardinoled group and a rival consortium led by Nigel Wray and local author Phil Soar.

The Anderson-backed pro-

Anderson waits in wings in Forest fray

posal would see each of Forest's 202 shareholders receive around £50,000 for their stake. far more than under each of the

Last week, letters were sent to Forest shareholders by Phil Murdoch, a local antiques dealer who is also a shareholder, suggesting that they vote against both the Scardino and Wray-Soar bids.

However, Mr Anderson is thought to be unwilling to indulge in any spoiling tactics. He has made it clear that he will only re-enter the fray if neither of the two bids are successful

Both Mr Reacher and Sandy Anderson were in the directors' box at Forest's FA cup defeat at Chesterfield on Saturday along with other well-known Forest

for the club. I have spoken to some other shareholders and they feel the same." It is understood that a share-

fans including Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke.

has been greeted with dismay by

some Forest shareholders. They

say further delays to the own-

ership question could jeopardise

Forest's bankers are said to

be ready to call in loans made

to the club the day after next

week's emergency meeting if neither of the bids is successful.

player and now a sports pre-senter on Radio Trent, said

yesterday: "If this happens I fear

Larry Lloyd, a former Forest

The emergence of a third bid

holder buyout of Forest was discussed last autumn but dismissed on the grounds it was not financially viable.

Utilities 'complacent' over 2000 crisis

The heads of the privatised utilities have been accused of complacency by a governmentsponsored taskforce over their response to the looming year 2000 computer crisis, writes Chris Godsmark.

Taskforce 2000, the body set up by the Department of Trade and industry to publicise the so-called "millennium problem",

all the utilities in November asking them what preparations their companies had made. However, only a third of the utilities bothered to reply to the letter. Robin Guenier, head of the taskforce, described the response as "extremely thin."

wrote to the chief executives of computer systems shut themselves down when the date changes. Most programmes can only register the last two digits of the year, so that when 2000 approaches, many will interpret the date as 1900, causing widespread and unpredictable problems. Taskforce 2000 fears that Industry experts have pre-dicted chaos across the world as in many places as fail-safe

Wall Street where a big correc-tion may still be pending and

further interest rate rises have

not been ruled out. The Hong

Nevertheless the Year of the

Kong market sticks tenaciously

systems are automatically activated. Though the Taskforce 2000

letter was addressed to chief executives in the utilities, only two replied in person. The rest of the responses were mostly delegated to less senior individuals. Mr Guenier said he would take up the issue up with the companies personally.

IN BRIEF

 John Monks, TUC General Secretary, warned that the introduction of a minimum wage could have a knock-on effect on jobs. Mr Monks, in an interview on LWT's Dimblehy programme, said: "Nobody knows at all what the effects of pay on jobs are ... There could or might not be some knock-on." Labour and the TUC sup-port the introduction of a minimum wage and the European Social Chapter although Labour has so far refused to set a level for the minimum wage. Shadow treasury secretary Alistair Darling pledged, on the same programme, that a Labour government would not adopt a level which would disrupt the economy.

 Pay awards are flat in manufacturing industry but rising in services, according to a report published today. The Confederation of British Industry said its pay databank showed pay awards in the manufacturing sector provisionally averaged 3.1 per cent for the three months to the end of December. That is unchanged from the figure for the three months to September and down from 3.7 per cent for the corresponding period in 1995. A third of manufacturers said that their inability to raise prices was keeping down pay awards. However, in the bigger service sector, pay awards increased slightly with awards provisionally averaging 3.8 per cent in the three months to December compared with 3.6 per cent in the previous quarter and 3.4 per cent a year ago.

 Investcorp, the Bahrain-based investment group, reported record
 1996 profits yesterday. Its net earnings rose 28.6 per cent to \$90.4m. and the group said it planned to double dividends. The strong performance was in large part due to the sale of its remaining holding in Gucci, the Italian luxury goods maker. The company also said it was poised for new acquisitions in Europe and the US, but would not comment on a weekend newspaper report that Investoorp is the front-runner to buy Welcome Break, the chain of motorway service stations, from Granada.

· Air UK and KLM are to integrate their sales and marketing functions from April, allowing the co-ordination of the two carriers' UK, European and inter-continental flights via Amsterdam's Schipol airport. The two have combined turnover in the UK of about £400m. Air UK operates from Stansted and London City airports.

 Germany is beating the UK in the rate at which it is creating high-technology jobs, according to a new study. Six out of the top 10 European regions for employment in high-tech sectors are in Germany, headed by Baden-Württenburg and Saarland. The top UK region is the West Midlands, at number seven, according to

Dr Doom snubs fung shui bulls in Year of the Ox terests account for over twoin the market if it saw prices falling substantially. There has The problem for the market is far more likely to reside in

INTEREST RATES

Stephen Vines Hong Kong

FTSE 100

Today Hong Kong stockbrokers get down to the first full week of business since the start of the Chinese Year of the Ox. which may not turn out to quite so bullish as the year's name

Although sentiment is far from bearish, it seems unlikely that the market will be able to repeat last year's 34 per cent rise when the rat reigned supreme. giving its name to a year that saw tremendous excitement in the property sector. Property shares and property-related inthirds of the underlying assets determining the stock market's

Therefore, as ever, all eyes are on the property market. If the annual Credit Lyonnais fung shui index predictions are to be believed, residential propcrty prices will break records as "earth-related products" are set for a good year.

The Crédit Lyonnais predictions began as little more than a lark but have established an astonishingly good track record for predicting market movements according to ancient Chinese principles of

Source: FT Information

geomancy. However not all fung shui masters agree with those employed by the Crédit Lvonnais brokerage.

Choi Park-lai, one of Hong Kong's most famous masters, takes an opposite view, saying that the elements for the coming year are not good for property projects built from the ground, or in other words the new developments which traditionally drive the market.

Away from geomancy, the number-crunchers in most broking houses are looking forward to a reasonably good year, with the most optimistic pre-dicting that the blue-chip Hang

Seng Index will rise to over 16,500 points, against the 13,404 close at the end of the Year of the Rat. A more general consensus has the market moving up towards 14,500 points.

However, the investment fund manager Marc Faber, known as "Dr Doom", would not be surprised if the market dips below 10,000 points. China resumes sovereignty

over Hong Kong in July and is seemingly determined to see the new era ushered in with a healthy stock market. Last year a senior Chinese official was quoted as saying that the Peking government would intervene

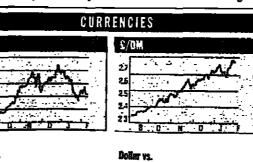
been some back-tracking on this pledge since then. Direct government interven-

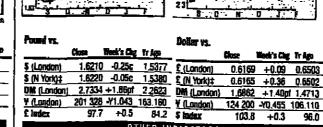
tion in the market is unknown in Hong Kong, although there have been instances of government pressure to move interest rates and the government was forced to bail out the futures market after the 1987 crash.

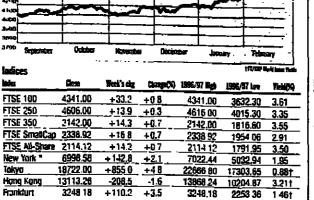
There is no underlying reason to expect such action will be necessary in the coming year. China-related stocks, alongside the property and banking sectors, are high on the buy lists pumped out by local analysis.

Ox is a historic year for Hong Kong and many of the biggest players also serve as the most influential advisers to the incoming Chinese administration. They have been talking up the territory's prospects and assuring their new patrons that they will do their bit to give a fair wind to the new regime.

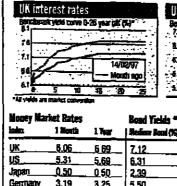
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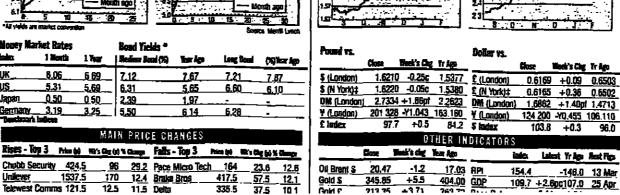






STOCK MARKETS





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Labouring under delusions about cost of old age

tration of how badly Europe's labour markets perform. The immediate social cost of such wasteful levels of memployment is high and obvious. But the full economic costs are still not fully appreciated. High un-employment contributes to the European pensions crisis – the two problems are largely one and the same.

If European unemployment can be brought down, and employment boosted, the economic burden imposed by the need to provide adequate old-age pensions will automatically become much lighter. Indeed, if continental unemployment and labour force participation rates move closer to British and US levels, old-age pensions might even be funded, in an economic sense, on a pay-as-you-go basis indefinitely. Europe has a labour market problem, not a pension problem. This view is markedly at odds with received wisdom. A sharp rise in the number of European pensioners, relative to the number of adults of working age, is a demographic inevitability. And most continental pension provision is funded

and paid from ongoing tax receipts.

As a result, it is taken for granted that Europe will find it difficult to support its pensioner population because the tax base will shrink. The report of the UK Social Security Select Committee in October on unfunded pension liabilities in the EU provides a recent illustration of consensus vides a recent illustration of consensus | metic: it suggests a sharp, poten-thinking on the subject. However, the crude | tially worrying rise in dependency.

The rise in German unemployment in | demographic arithmetic is misleading. The | January was another shocking illusage profile of the population is only one of the many factors influencing the dependency burden. Most importantly, adults in work support not just the elderly, but also non-working adults - those who have chosen not to participate in the workforce.

The extent of adult dependency varies considerably across countries, and through time. In the US and the UK, participation rates are high, and unemployment is low, partly reflecting the flexibility of labour sup-ply and demand. And in both countries, par-ticipation rates have usen in the last 20 years as household habits have changed. In Enrope, participation rates are relatively low, and unemployment is high. As a result, labour as a factor of production is underutilised. But relatively small changes in the employed portion of the population of working age can have a big effect on the dependency arithmetic.

The point is easily illustrated. Over the next quarter-ceatury, the propor-tion of the French population aged 65 and above will rise from roughly 15 to 21 per cent, while the proportion of working age will fall slightly, from 65 to 63 per cent: as a result, the ratio of pensioners to potential workers will rise from 23 to 33 per cent, a proportionate increase of more than two-fifths. This is the conventional arith-

workforce is currently employed; and with a participation rate of roughly 67 per cent this in turn probably represents just 59 per cent of the population of working age, or just 38 per cent of the total population. Mean-while, if we add the non-working portion of the non-retired adult population to those who are retired, the proportion of adult "dependents" rises from 15 per cent of the

total population to 42 per cent.

When the denominator is adjusted downwards accordingly, and the numerator upwards, the current dependency ratio rises sharply, to more than 100 per cent. Thus in France there are already more adult dependents than there are workers. In itself, this simple adjustment makes the problem look dramatically different. If the pattern of participation and employment remains the same, but the population's age structure evolves as expected over the next quarter-century, the resultant rise in the ratio of pen-

The elderly are not the only dependants -16

However, only 88 per cent of the French | sioners to potential workers turns out to be | spectrum is the current spectre of longer one-fifth, not two-fifths, a much smaller increase. Non-working adults age alongside the workers.

But the arithmetic really becomes interesting if we suppose that in the quarter-century ahead, France is able, via a combination of more flexible working practices and changes in household preferences, to approach the sort of unemployment and par-ticipation rates seen in the UK and the US. Then, instead of rising, adult dependency might actually fall by the year 2020, perhaps by as much as one-fifth.

This is a sensational possibility. Of course, it takes no account of details such as the extent of part-time employment and low pay, but it illustrates the potential importance of changes in labour market practice. Other continental economies are in a similar position. In principle, today's pay-as-you-go intra-family transfers (housekeeping), unem-ployment benefits and student grants could

provide tomorrow's pay-as-yougo-pensions - if European labour markets reform.

This also understates the potential good news. Economies that employ a bigger proportion of their population will be more productive, and the size of the economic cake available for redistribution could be much bigger than is currently predicted on the basis of past growth trends. Thus at one end of the working lives and lowered pension entitlements; at the other lies the tantalising prospect of a longer and wealthier retirement

A less wasteful usage of European lahour need not prevent the long-awaited shift from public to private-sector pension schemes on the Continent. In an increasingly unified, flexible labour market in which workers are able and willing to change jobs and location more often than in the past, private savings schemes may become more attractive in their own right. Meanwhile, the growing interest in equities in the European financial markets is likely to give a further boost to the process. But a more productive Europe will be better able to meet the claims on future output which these schemes represent than a Europe that continues to squander its valuable human resources.
The arithmetical illustration above, while

extreme, is not beyond the realms of possibility: the UK unemployment rate has moved in a 9-point range in the last quarter-century, the participation rate in a 5-point range. The political pressure to do something about European unemployment is rising. Is it not inconsistent to be worrying about both a prospective glut of labour (unemployment) and a shortage (too many pensioners) at the same time?

Kevin Gardiner is a senior economist at Morgan Stanley International: the views ex-

UK set for £20bn telecoms boost

Diane Coyle Economics Editor

Britain could receive a £20bn trade boost during the next decade from the sweeping free trade pact in telecommunications announced at the World Trade Organisation at the weekend.

The UK, along with the US, is in a strong position to bene-fit from the possible doubling in size of the \$600bn world telecommunications market. The new deal was announced, to applause in the WTO's Geneva headquarters, just a few hours before the midnight on Saturday deadline for negotiations to end.

Ian Taylor, Britain's science

should usher in an explosive growth in turnover and investment world-wide." The UK telecoms industry already had a turnover twice the size of the car industry, he said.

Charlene Barshefsky, the US trade representative, was equally upbeat. "We expect the agreement will lead to the creation of approximately a million US jobs in the next 10 years," she said. The industries that would benefit ranged from communications companies themselves to equipment makers, electronic publishers and software providers.

Sir Leon Brittan, the EU's Trade Commissioner, said: "In addition to what this deal will do for the telecoms industry, it is a and technology minister, said: major step also in the creation markets. "The agreement in Geneva of the information society."

The UN's International Telecommunications Union predicted that the telecoms industry's world revenues could almost double to \$1,200bn by the year 2000. Neil McMillan, chairman of the WTO talks, predicted a \$1,000bn increase in investment, and predicted the new deal would slash personal

For all the euphoria about their potential benefits, the WTO talks came close to collapse at several stages. The original deadline for a telecoms trade deal was April 1996, but some countries - most importantly, the US - were concerned about opening their markets without good enough reciprocal access to overseas

and business phone bills.

principle came in December at the WTO's annual meeting in Singapore. But even then there were doubts that enough countries would sign up to make it viable. A late US concession opened the way for the pact covering 95 per cent of the world's telecoms trade.

Mr Taylor said yesterday that Britain was well placed to take advantage of growing trade and investment in telecommunications. "We were the first in Europe, and one of the first in the world, to introduce competition in 1984. Our experience in the UK of vastly improved services and some £4bn a year being invested in making the UK the most advanced network in the world, has shown what such a deal can offer to the whole A breakthrough agreement in world," he said.



Green light: lan Taylor believes explosive growth lies ahead | all-seater stadium.

Charlton will field Grade as adviser

Nigel Cope

Charlton Athletic Football club has announced the ap-4 boss Michael Grade as a nonexecutive director, saying his television and leisure experience "would help to open many doors". Mr Grade is a keen Charl-

ton supporter and season ticket holder who acquired a stake in the club in the early 1990s when it was redeveloping its ground at the Valley in south London.

Charlton is planning a listing on the Alternative Investment Market which will raise around £6m to continue the development of the Valley into a 20,000

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Commenting on the ap-pointment of Mr Grade, who recently quit as head of Channel 4 to become chairman of pointment of former Channel First Leisure, Charlton chairman Richard Murray said: "His experience of the television and leisure sectors will be invaluable to us as we work to implement our plans to develop Charlton."

He said the planned 8,000seat stand at Charlton would have space for other facilities. such as a gym or a bowling alley, on which Mr Grade might be able to advise.

Mr Murray said that Charlton's gates had risen by 58 per cent since the club returned to its own ground. He said the club would be profitable this

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NOTICE TO READERS Whilst we take reasonable precantions with all vertisements, readers are strongly advised to take professional advice before

Monday 17 February 1997: The week starts here

stood on the pavement outside 52 Poland Street in Soho, looking into a bright new restaurant called Yo!. The establishment is Japanese, in which language the word

means roughly what it does in English Some hundred people can sit at a winding counter and watch a 60-metre conveyor belt come chugging by bearing 300 plates of sushi and sashimi. The colour band on the plate determines the price from \$1 (lime green) for cocumber sushi, to £2.80 (purple) for a sea slug. Salmon, eel, tuna and prawn

are differently coloured and cost in between.

Three robotic drink trolleys cruise their selected paths behind the diners, travelling at the speed of a fast tortoise; they bear cold beers and warm rice wine. The restaurant exercises a hollow glass policy: £1 gets you unlimited still or sparkling water from a tap by your side. Soy sauce, sliced marinated ginger and green-tinged Japanese horse-radish – so strong that a milligram makes you catch your breath while your eyes water - are free.

Across the counter on the staff side of the production line, surgically gloved young men and women restock the gaps in the line. A man called Hamish, who does not look Japanese (turns out to come from Framlingham, Suffolk), explains all, and is there should you need further enlightenment or the bill; this is assessed on the number and colour of empty plates in front of you, and ignores the ones you have been able to slip into your jacket pocket.

In a café in Ilfracombe I once heard a waiter call into the kitchen: "Double egg, chips and beans chef; it's for the table in the window." I asked why the position of the table mattered.

We always serve bigger portions to the table in the window."

Nothing like that at Yo!, where the voyeurs on the pavement see little but the creeping drink trolley and the backs of contented diners - though many confronted by the endless line of barrel-shaped morsels would probably welcome the sight of a red, white and blue plate bearing fried quail's eggs with pommes allumettes. Yo to egg and chips; to hell with all exclamation marks.

David Austick, who died last week, was elected to Parliament on the same day as me. Between us, we caused an overnight 25 per cent increase in Liberal representation in the House, something that has probably not been done before, and is certainly fairly unique. (I have stopped being the only person not to qualify the word "unique".)

Having "got in" on 27 July 1973, we took our seats at the end of the summer recess, three months later; served five weeks; adjourned for the Christmas recess; and came back to learn of the prorogation announcement for the February 1974 election. But, nevertheless, we had our

moments. On the day we took our seats, the Liberal press office, concerned about what are now called "sound bites", decided that it would be safer to opt for a photo-opportu-

nity and hired a bicycle made for two. Being good Liberals, we argued about who was to ride in front, an argument I finally lost by virtue of age, alphabetical precedence and seniority of service (his result had been announced an hour and 10 minutes before mine). However, as neither of us had ridden a tandem, we stood on either side of the bike and posed for photographers, one of whom asked what were our policies. Austick thought site valuation rating was probably the sexiest one

on our agenda.

That afternoon in the chamber, our party, renowned for meeting in telephone boxes, achieved double figures. Jeremy Thorpe regarded us proudly, beamed at Aus-tick, turned to his whip and said, "We've got a backbencher at last."

Clement

Freud

Many would

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white and blue

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pommes

allumettes

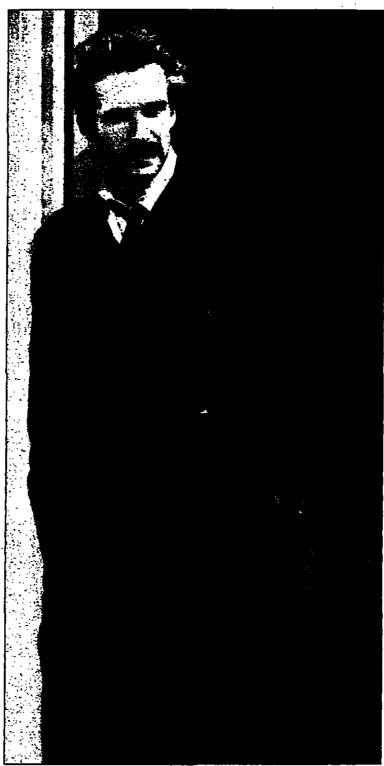
Austick lost his seat at that first general election; I lasted longer. Had I hung on in, I would be asking the Heritage Secretary at question time whether it is the Government, Camelot or the "good causes" who are beneficiaries of inter-est on delayed and unclaimed winning lottery tickets, and whether she will give an estimate of the sum involved.

Perhaps Mrs Bottomley will read this

nlike Rosemary Foster, who recorded U 225mg on the breathalyser (see right), the only time I was asked to blow into the bag was when I had not touched alcohol for

I had reversed my vintage Bentley out of the drive into the hedge on the opposite side of the country road, and the engine cut out. After protracted investigation, I discovered that dirt from the hedge was

blocking the car's exhaust. I opened the tool kit, found a long silver-plated starting-handle and thrust it up the pipe to clear the impediments. A passing police car took one look at what was going on and two men got out, one of whom said: "Excuse me, sir ...



Ralph Fiennes as Ivanov, a hero of tragic proportions

Time to catch another Fiennes role

Theatre: After the stunning Cherry Orchard at London's Albery Theatre, Ivanov, a lesser-known Chekhov, opens today at the Almeida. This is a play of immense power. It may lack the web-like intrincies of his other works, but easily makes up dramatic ground with a tragic hero of Hamlet proportions – appropriately, since the star, Ralph Fiennes, and director Jonathan Kent last collaborated on Hamlet at the Hackney Empire three years ago. The production co-stars Harriet Walter. Only a few tickets are left - £6.50, for the whole run until April - so you'll really have to get a move on. (0171-359 4404) Performance starts: 7:30pm.

From Hodgkin to Hogg, from Travolta to something bizarre in Shropshire, this is the page to help make sure you don't miss out onanything you don't want to miss out on

Sad to be grey

Theatre: If you haven't seen the Howard Hodgkin exhibition by now, where have you been? The vast swatnes of colours amidst a grey winter and grey Hayward Gallery are too wonderful and vast to be ignored. Our critic wrote: "Like the smile of the Cheshire Cat in Alice, a generalised (light-drenched mood seems to be transmitted from the paintings." Soon you'll be too late; it closes this Sunday. Hayward Gallery, London. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Tue & Wed until 8pm. Tickets £5, £3:50.

Angel face Film (here): Reaffirm your faith in lurve with John Travolta's new film Michael (nationwide from Friday), It's a tale about an angel with an endearingly human taste for booze, women and cigarettes. Film (there): The Berlin Film Festival is in its final week. Look in the "Forum" section for young directors. Also Panna & Nikt, by the Polish director Andrzej Wajda, on 23

February. Fly from Heathrow on Thursday for the last three days of the festival for £112 return with BA. For the festival; 00 4930 25 48 92

Pigging out
Pop: The Longoigs' gig at London's
Forum is already sold out. There will
be a few £8.50 tickets at the door on Thursday if you'd like to see the angsty, Sheffield indie guitar quartet in action.

Tutti frutti Opera: Spring is here! Farewell to the wintry darkness of Palestrina and ohengin at the Royal Opera House (19 and 22 February 6pm). Welcome Jonathan Miller's light pastel-coloured Cosi fan Tutte (21 February to 19 March, 7pm, £19.50 - £100).

Still One-derful?

Listening: Today we'll discover whether there's life after the Ginger One-derful. Chris Evans has deserted Radio 1, and so have 500,000 listeners. Today we get the sounds of the north at breakfast with Mark Radcliffe. What's Tony Blackburn up to these days?

Superwoman, Superman? Reading: Cosmopolitan, the magazine that taught women to uggle orgasms, men and work has a long-distance competitor. If you are in Shropshire tomorrow and happen

to see a car hurtling through the air,

you're probably watching the launch



John Travolta: angelic

of Bizarre, a magazine mainly for men. The first issue investigates herbal highs, the curse of Superman and Holland's No 1 orgy organiser. It is on news-stands from Wednesday.

Cheers, tears
Drinking (1): The champion winter
beer of Britain will be announced at the Great British Winter Beer Festival, Candleriggs Hall, Glasgow (Thurs-Sat).

Drinking (2 much): A woman who drove on a motorway nearly stx-trad-a-half times over the limit will be sentenced today at Macclesfield, Cheshire. The breath test reading of 225mg given by 23-year-old Rosemary Foster is the highest ever. by a woman.

Where's the beef? Politics: "Beef is perfectly safe; and a good product" claimed Doug a good product claimed Douglas. Hogg in November 1995. This was disproved less than a year later, and Hogg's handling of the crisis has made him the most vulnerable member of the Cabinet. Now the Labour Party fancies going for the jugular with a motion of censure against him for debate today. It could (though it is unlikely) bring down the Government.

If he survives all the sound and the Major will fight back on Thursday an attack in the Commons on Labour's plans for constitutional reform, which he believes is Blair s. Achilles' heel (the Tories don't have one, of course). After this will be a show of unity, at their Local Government Conference in Birmingham on Friday and Saturday. John Major will be speaking at a raily afterwards.

Research: Grania Hehlr, James Aufenast

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-1-6

Watch out for

Danielle Gatti, new man at the RPO, talks to Malcolm Hayes

No. 3224. Monday 17 February





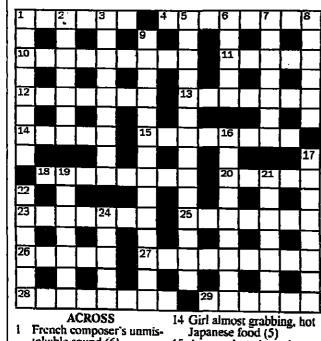
GCSE at 7 Do we expect enough of our children? **EDUCATION +**



Winona Ryder talks to Emma **Forrest** about 'The Crucible'

This week in

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



takable sound (6) Designed to raise money

for marine area (5,3) 10 Deliberately touching ob-11 Working inside but minus

electricity (2,3) 12 Concerned with matter of detail (7) 13 Promise director to get

busy (7)

15 Accepted cutting price of ornament (8) 18 Approximate time taken

to supply fibre (8) 20 Number of children (5) Clear one's daughter is involved in case (7)
25 End product's a fine sort

of cheese cloth (7)

26 Hear distant mock attack

27 Discover a second positive 28 Regimental music? (3.5) 29 He backs superior (6)

Do well, getting -many in around tea-time (8) Looks at including detailed description of what's needed by society

Gracious, Pole's going wild on a drunken spree Veg that's frozen solid?

Due to start off in the boat race (5) Getting on about new mid-day programme (6)

Sweet replaced at centre of pack (10,4) 16 Strengthen curb alongside drive (9)

Aren't worried about one royal servant (8) Woman swallows fashionable stone (7) 21 Guy's sudden move out of

quarters (7) 22 Choose to meet, being ready at last (3,3)

Celebrates once French department's set up (5) MERCURY

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